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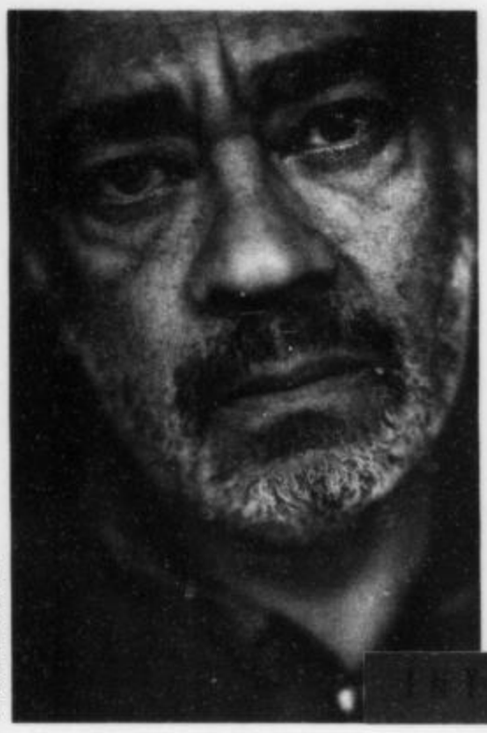

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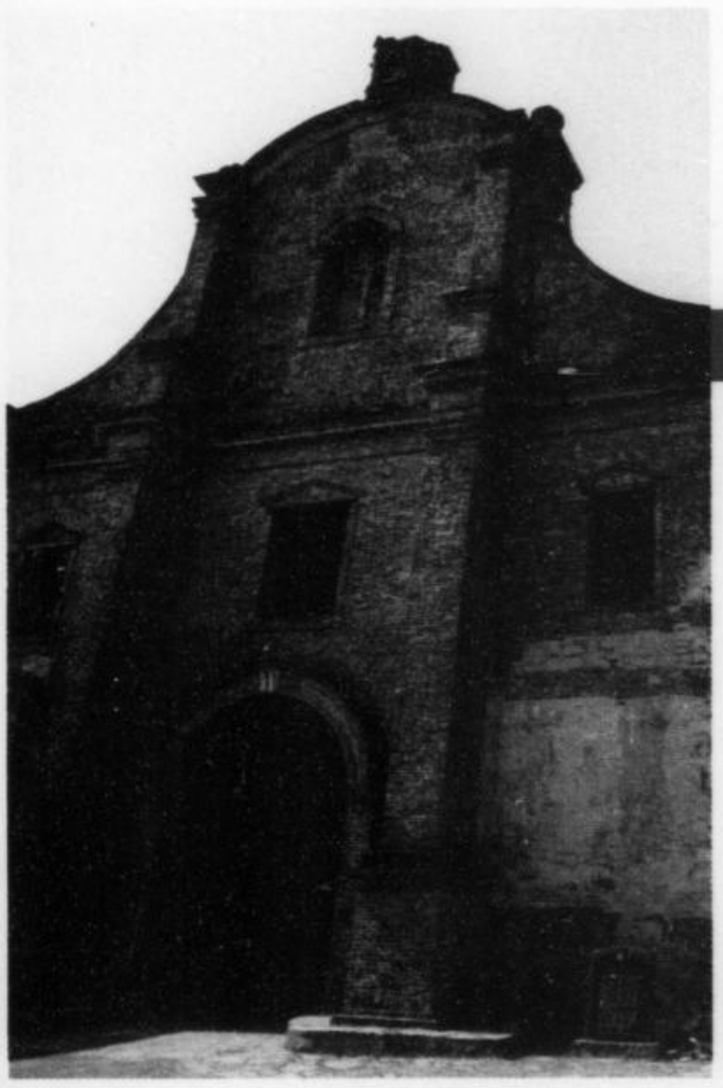
For Haitian-born painter **Hervé Télémaque**, *art is more necessary than ever in the modern world* **4**

A baroque church in the Philippines *(p. 44), where an unusual composite style grew out of collaboration between Spanish missionaries and local craftsmen.*



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P. Chaline © Michèle de la Pradelle, Bibliothèque Inguimbert, Carpentras

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Cover: Market scene in Mexico (1987). The signature of this painting is indecipherable. Perhaps a reader will be able to solve the mystery for us. . . .

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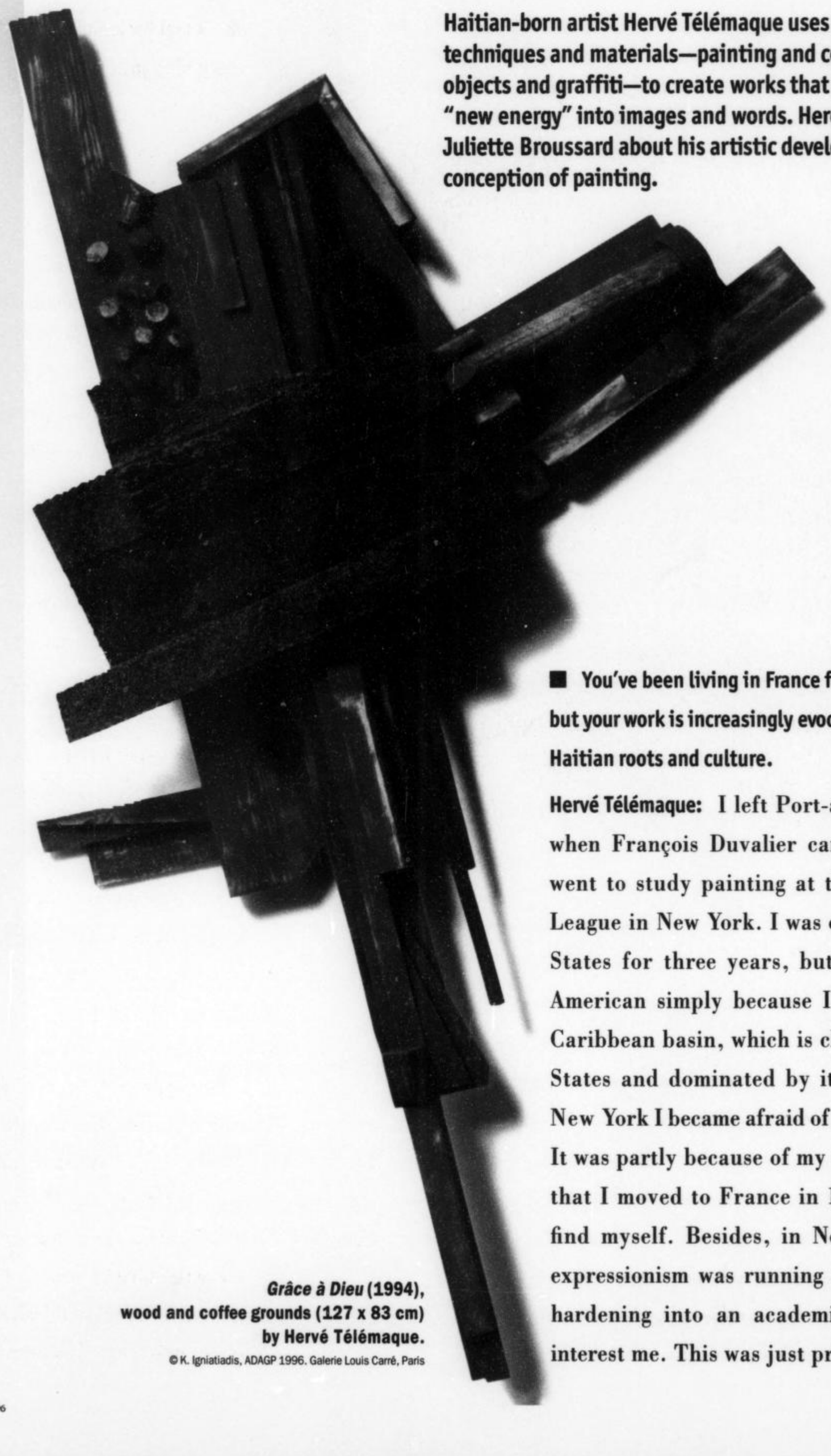
interview

Hervé Télémaque

Art tells the story of our time on earth

Haitian-born artist Hervé Télémaque uses a mixture of techniques and materials—painting and collage, salvaged objects and graffiti—to create works that attempt to infuse "new energy" into images and words. Here he talks to Juliette Broussard about his artistic development and his conception of painting.

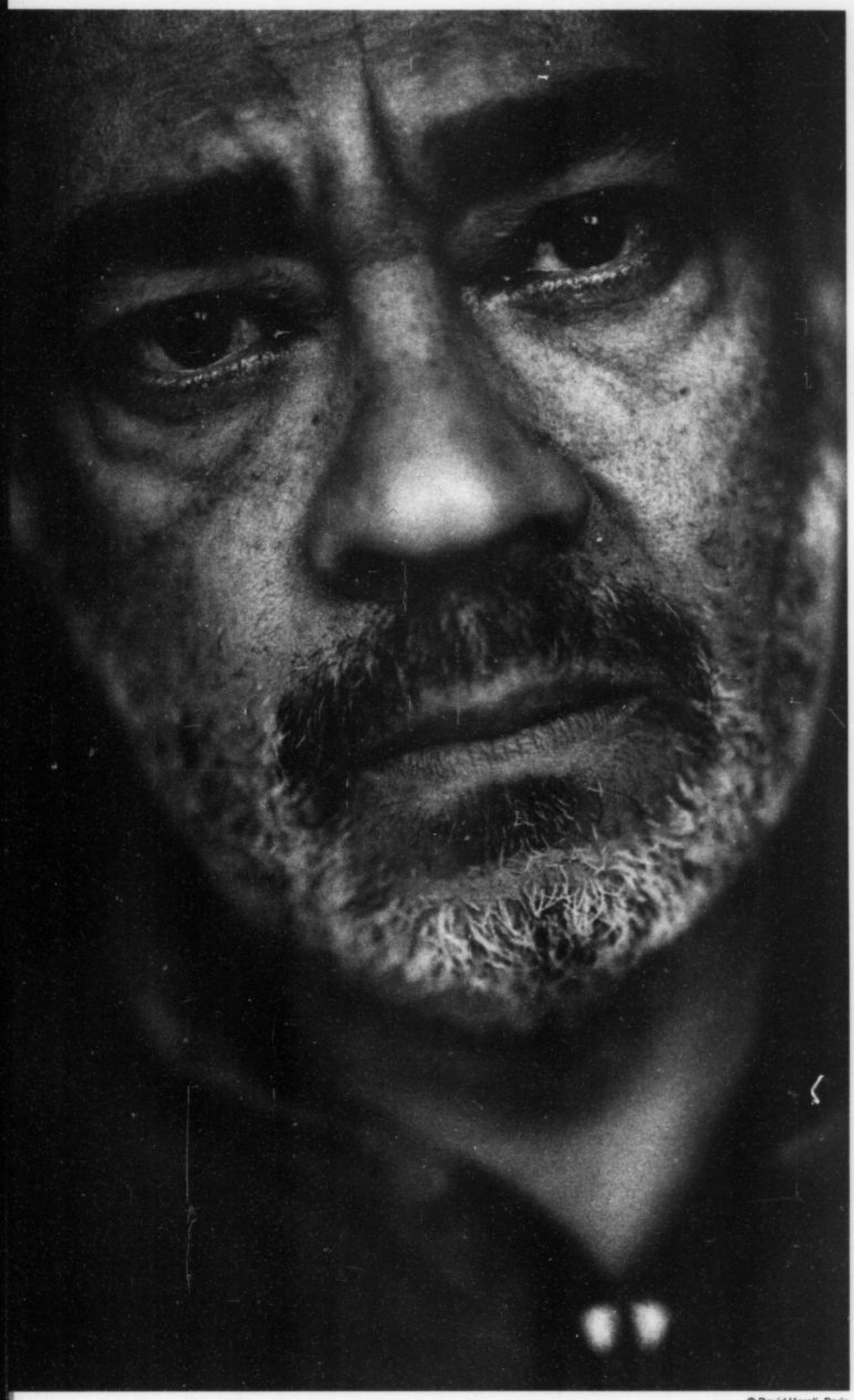


***Grâce à Dieu* (1994), wood and coffee grounds (127 x 83 cm) by Hervé Télémaque.**

© K. Igniatiadis, ADAGP 1996. Galerie Louis Carré, Paris

■ **You've been living in France for thirty-five years, but your work is increasingly evocative of your Haitian roots and culture.**

Hervé Télémaque: I left Port-au-Prince in 1957 when François Duvalier came to power and went to study painting at the Art Students' League in New York. I was only in the United States for three years, but in a sense I am American simply because I was born in the Caribbean basin, which is close to the United States and dominated by its models. But in New York I became afraid of losing my identity. It was partly because of my quest for identity that I moved to France in 1961. I wanted to find myself. Besides, in New York abstract expressionism was running out of steam and hardening into an academicism that didn't interest me. This was just prior to the renewal



© David Harali, Paris

that came in with pop art. Moreover, France is an integral part of Haitian culture, its fantasies and its relationship with language. Since Haiti is French-speaking, returning to Europe was a move towards my formative values.

■ **How much have you been influenced by the surrealists?**

H. T.: The surrealists showed me values that still govern my creative energy. My relationship to art is defined by psychoanalytical experimentation. I've remained very close to the plastic values expressed by Arshile Gorky, Giorgio de Chirico, René Magritte and Marcel Duchamp. The surrealists taught me that art could be a way of comprehending both the world and oneself. This self-knowledge naturally leads to all sorts of moral questions: relationships between people, love, social organization. One of the lessons of surrealism that I've always believed in is that the visual is not only a source of aesthetic pleasure but that its force lies in expressing a certain experience and an ambitious perception of existence. Art tells the story of our time on earth.

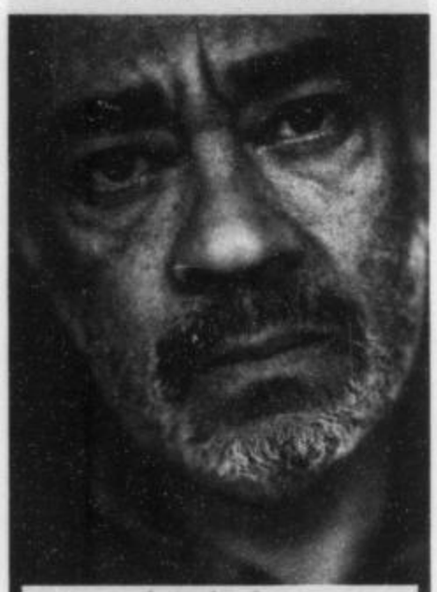
■ **A feel for language is very apparent in everything you do.**

H. T.: I love Haitian poetry, the work of people like Jacques Roumain and Carl Brouard, who define black identity. From very early on Haitian poetry, tuned in as it was to the history of the colonization of Santo Domingo, to slavery and the Haitian revolution of 1804, gave body to the concepts of negritude and black pride, concepts which Aimé Césaire later brought to a white heat in his great poem, *Return to My Native Land*. Apart from that, I've remained faithful to the poets I loved reading when I was young—Rimbaud, Saint-John Perse and André Breton. I like to quote what Saint-John Perse said in his acceptance speech for the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1960, "For if poetry is not, as it has been said, 'absolute reality', it is the closest we can get to understanding it, at that extreme limit of complicity where reality in the poem seems to inform itself."

■ **How do you work?**

H. T.: My way of working can be broken down into three stages. First of all I play around with the medium, then—this is the second stage—something clicks, a specific formal idea emerges. The third stage is when I put it all together. Technique only comes in at this final stage, which is subsidiary to the spontaneous original idea and to playing around with forms waiting to see what happens. My large charcoal drawings, which are more lyrical and stylistically unified, serve the formal idea by trying to capture a fantasy, a memory or a desire as simply as possible. In them objects become coats of arms, totems

interview



Hervé Télémaque

© David Harali, Paris

and emblems. I work with simple materials—wood, glue and screws. I use clamps. I love basic tools like the saw, which I sometimes use as a pencil, or the sander.

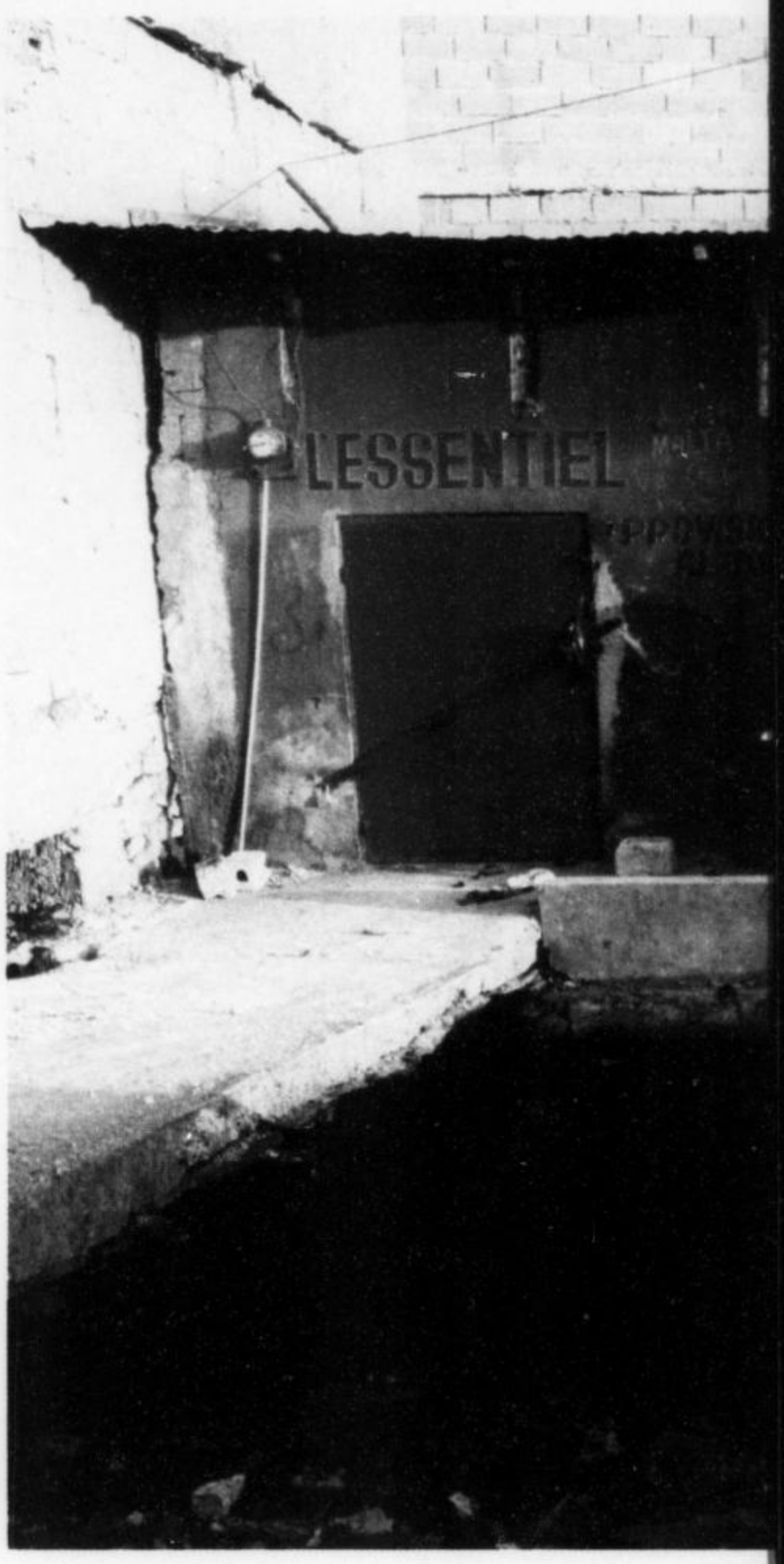
Take the charcoal drawings and objects that were shown at an exhibition of my work in 1994, *Fusain et marc de café* ("Charcoal and Coffee Grounds"), *Deuil: le dessin, l'objet* ("Mourning: the Drawing, the Object"). For the objects I used coffee grounds, a natural pigment, but to ironic effect. The dark charcoal evokes night, whereas the coffee could symbolize the transition from dark to light, from night to dawn—it's also an exotic colonial product that has given a lot of pleasure to white people.

■ **What about colour?**

H. T.: I use colour like a signal. In 1986, when the Duvalier regime ended, Haitians made symbolic use of red and blue, the colours of the national flag. The whole island was daubed with red and blue as part of a groundswell of popular feeling, a symbolic explosion after liberation from thirty years of dictatorship. I was very touched by the vulnerability of my people, who had nothing left but this sign, this simple marking in red and blue, as proof of their existence. I reduced my palette to those two elements, to that basic signal of identity.

■ **You are moving from a rather intellectual position towards simpler values.**

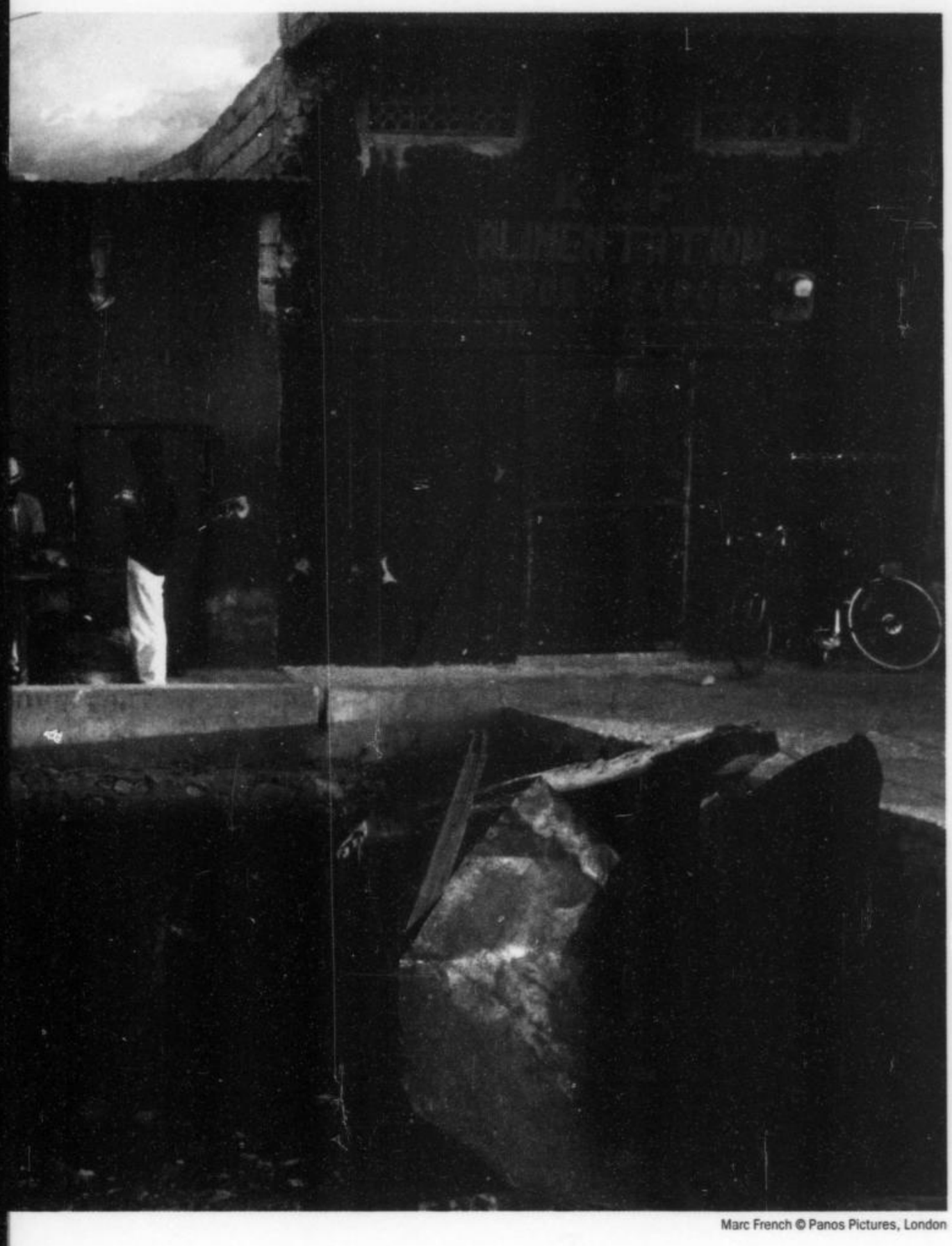
H. T.: Perhaps one grows simpler with age! While my works may once have been a bit too much of a virtuoso performance, I'm more sure of myself now. Doesn't all art tend towards simplicity and anonymity? Painters dabble with objects and ideas, manipulate signs and use their intuition. Artists are too often lumped together with intellectuals. My feeling is that artists should listen to their inner selves, give expression to their creativity and avoid self-censorship. My art is never programmed. What's best in artists wends its way through them without any strict programming. I also think it's a good thing to let memories float to the surface. I once saw a magazine photo of a woman in Soweto in South Africa whose fat legs



reminded me of the legs of my old nanny, Christiane. There was no direct connection between the two, but it was a moment that brought a memory back to the surface. I think there are no lies in art.

■ **As an artist, where do you stand in today's culture and society?**

H. T.: It seems to me there's a crisis in the visual arts, and it's good to get back to simple, basic things. My current work is dominated by my love of drawing. Drawing on a sheet of paper is simpler than painting. From drawing I go straight to objects, and that means colour. I am first and foremost a painter. A painter-assembler, if you like. I regard painting as the most advanced, the most complex of the visual arts. The arts seem to me to be a natural vehicle for greater understanding between cultures. Just think how immersed we all are in jazz, without



Marc French © Panos Pictures, London

A tailor in Port-au-Prince (Haiti).

realizing it. Blacks have made a big contribution through music. Music is the way to an understanding of the black character. We all travel, we all move endlessly from place to place. What worries me is the bulldozer effect of world television that broadcasts the same series all over the planet. I feel we are going through a schizophrenic period. It's more necessary than ever to be receptive to one's inner self, to be alert to one's own dreams. It makes me think again of Saint-John Perse, who urged us not to forget the man of clay.

■ **Do people still think of art as a necessity?**

H. T.: Absolutely! But the meaning of culture must be redefined. Look at the United States. You might think that such a materialistic society could do without art. But look at all the great American artists there are! They prove that there is a need for art, that art is useful—otherwise it wouldn't exist. The museums and the number of people who go to them are ample proof of this.

■ **Has contemporary art emerged from an older art?**

H. T.: The widespread interest in the art forms of the past arose at the beginning of this century with the poet Guillaume Apollinaire. In my case it was during a visit to Egypt that I found a kind of basis for modern art. In the art of the ancient Egyptians I saw a justification for certain major choices—stylistic clarity, directness and the link with language. With hieroglyphics we move from a painted image to a written sign, which is very modern, for this question of moving from writing to the visual is still highly topical. It was in Egypt that I found an art that probably heralds all Western culture. And has never been bettered. To my mind its characteristics are a very high level of refinement and a message of great complexity. Despite this complexity, I am fascinated by the accessibility of this art, by its regard for essentials, its lack of any leanings towards naturalism. Of course I am simply talking about its formal aspects, since I am not capable of deciphering the whole Egyptian cosmogony. With its exquisite draughtsmanship and sense of volume, ancient Egyptian art is in complete contrast, to take one example, with the simplicity of Oceanian sculpture, which is nonetheless one of the pinnacles of world art. With the Egyptians a whole world is constructed, whereas in New Guinea, we're listening to primal humanity, closer to the earth and the gods.

■ **Does art teaching today succeed in making students aware of contemporary art?**

H. T.: Contrary to what is widely thought, modern art—even abstract art—seems to me more accessible than the high art of the Renaissance, for example, which often calls for knowledge of the great myths and of religion. I think modern art is a more direct mirror, favourable to an interchange between the work of art and its audience. In many cases its questioning of appearances makes use of irony, perhaps to express the complexities of our time more accurately. ■

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The marketplace past and present

It has become virtually impossible to live in isolation from the marketplace. Our needs have become so diversified that they can only be met by constant recourse to products, services, finance and information available on the market. And market transactions have become so intensive and so far-reaching that they are now planet-wide. One might say that the pulse of world economic activity today is measured by the state of the market.

It has not always been so.

For thousands of years the market was only of marginal importance. On the one hand it brought into contact separate, self-sufficient communities which exchanged among themselves goods that were merely ancillary, inessential to their internal balance. On the other, the people who engaged in these transactions attached less importance to economic considerations than they did to the imperatives of religion, custom and lineage that governed their lives.

But even within these limits, the market played an extremely important role as a channel of communication. It was the only opportunity for closed communities to open their doors, however briefly, to the outside world, make contact with others and catch a glimpse of human diversity. In the long run, trade promoted the circulation of ideas, technical innovation and productive work.

In the modern age the status of the market changed. It ceased to be a mechanism of secondary exchange and became instead a mainspring of social activity, the regulator of production. The economy—hitherto the servant of non-materialistic ends which the group considered sacred—became a law unto itself, gradually infiltrating into all areas of life, harnessing everything within reach to its purposes and eventually transforming all established values—including cultural, traditional

© Thierry Nectoux, Paris

by Bahgat Elnadi and Adel Rifaat

and moral values—into commodities that could be bought and sold.

Some reacted to this change by treating the market itself as sacred, regarding it as an impartial power governed by impersonal laws that would, via competition, inevitably encourage the best and penalize the mediocre. However, a closer look leads to the conclusion that while the market acts as an economic regulator and rationalizer, it tends to develop a network of inegalitarian relationships within which the law of the strongest triumphs over the spirit of reciprocity.

Freedom and inequality

In fact, the market can be seen as a kind of frontier area inhabited by two contradictory principles—freedom and inequality—between which only imperfect compromises can ever be made. A no-holds-barred free market is in fact a "free-for-all", a confrontation between strong and weak leading ultimately to situations where competition ceases to exist, thus jeopardizing the very principle of freedom and resulting in the impoverishment and exclusion of more and more economic agents. Beyond a certain threshold, the process breaks the bonds that hold society together and even, taken to extremes, makes it impossible for commercial activity to continue. And so, the argument goes, there must be a counterweight to market forces; the law of the market must be contained and regulated by political bodies which endeavour to maintain a certain balance between unbridled economic freedom and unchecked inequality.

Several attempts have been made this century to strike such a balance. For a wide variety of reasons, most of these attempts have failed.

This explains why in the past few years all kinds of attempts to liberalize markets and weaken the ideological basis of political interventionism have made great strides. The globalization of financial, technological and information flows, in these conditions, has created a highly volatile market that knows no frontiers, is prone to unpredictable developments and rapidly changing situations. In this globalized market competition favours big transnational groups (while not preventing the emergence of new pockets of prosperity) and no international body seems able to control economic behaviour or arbitrate, politically or legally, the conflicts resulting from it.

The globalization of corruption, siphoning off drug money and feeding international crime, is one dramatic symptom of this state of affairs which is corroding the foundations of democracy and undermining familiar religious, ethnic and national landmarks. It should come as no surprise that two very different trends are developing in response to this widespread corruption—the strengthening of democratic control mechanisms and recourse to the dictatorship of closed identities.

The marketplace is thus a crossroads, a meeting place of some key issues of the late twentieth century. In reporting on this crucial phenomenon we have tried to shed light not only on the ways in which it has changed and is changing but also, and above all, on its contradictory aspects. ■

The birth of *homo economicus*

BY ALAIN CAILLÉ

A historical approach to the development of the market economy

Has economic man, the selfish, calculating and rational individual that economists place at the heart of their theoretical constructions, always existed? Is he universal or, on the contrary, was he spawned recently by certain types of social relationships?

In areas where we today think in terms of bargaining (buying and selling goods), ancient societies reasoned in terms of gifts (compulsorily made, accepted and returned) and alliances, even if, according to the French sociologist Marcel Mauss, the personal material interest that lies at the heart of commercial exchange can always be detected behind these practices.

Prices fixed by custom

On the whole, the distribution of goods via the major trading processes in ancient societies did not serve a utilitarian purpose so much as satisfy a need for the extravagant and the prestigious. It was not so much a matter of receiving and accumulating as of appearing in the most generous and magnificent possible light.

Similarly, the countable objects which are widely regarded as being the forerunners of modern currency did not enable people to buy anything they wanted, but only to pay the debts of life and death. You paid the debt you had contracted towards those who gave you wives (and the children they bore)—in other words life—and towards those families in which you had caused a death. Trade grew up only on the outer confines of those communities, as a result of contact with people who did not belong to them: foreigners.

Evidence of long-distance trade goes back to prehistoric times, when certain goods travelled thousands of kilometres from their place of origin, but there is nothing to prove that such trading was organized in conformity with the principles of the market. The Hungarian-born economist Karl Polanyi believed that there is not necessarily any connection between trade and the market as it is understood in economic theory, or indeed between trade and village or local street markets. In Babylon and throughout the ancient world of the Middle East, large-scale trade was run and supervised by government officials. International prices were fixed by diplomatic treaties and could not be called into question or altered by bargaining.

More generally, in what might be called traditional markets, prices existed before trading took place and were not readily affected by the volume of that trading. They were social prices, fixed by custom, whereas the modern market analysed by economic theory is a self-regulated market where prices are independent of social relationships between people and result from the interplay of supply and demand. In Polanyi's view, it is this divorce between the market and social relationships in general that characterizes economic modernity.

Medieval markets, and a large proportion of markets in France during the Ancien Régime, when prices were strictly controlled, have little in common with self-regulated markets. It can also be argued that the kind of trading practised by leading merchants in Genoa, Amalfi, Venice and the Hanseatic ports at the end of the Middle Ages was venture- rather than market-oriented. The profits they made, although sometimes considerable, were uncertain and attendant on risk. They had no obvious connection with the law of supply and demand.

By the end of the sixteenth century, international trade in cereals and the main metals amounted to the equivalent of only about 1

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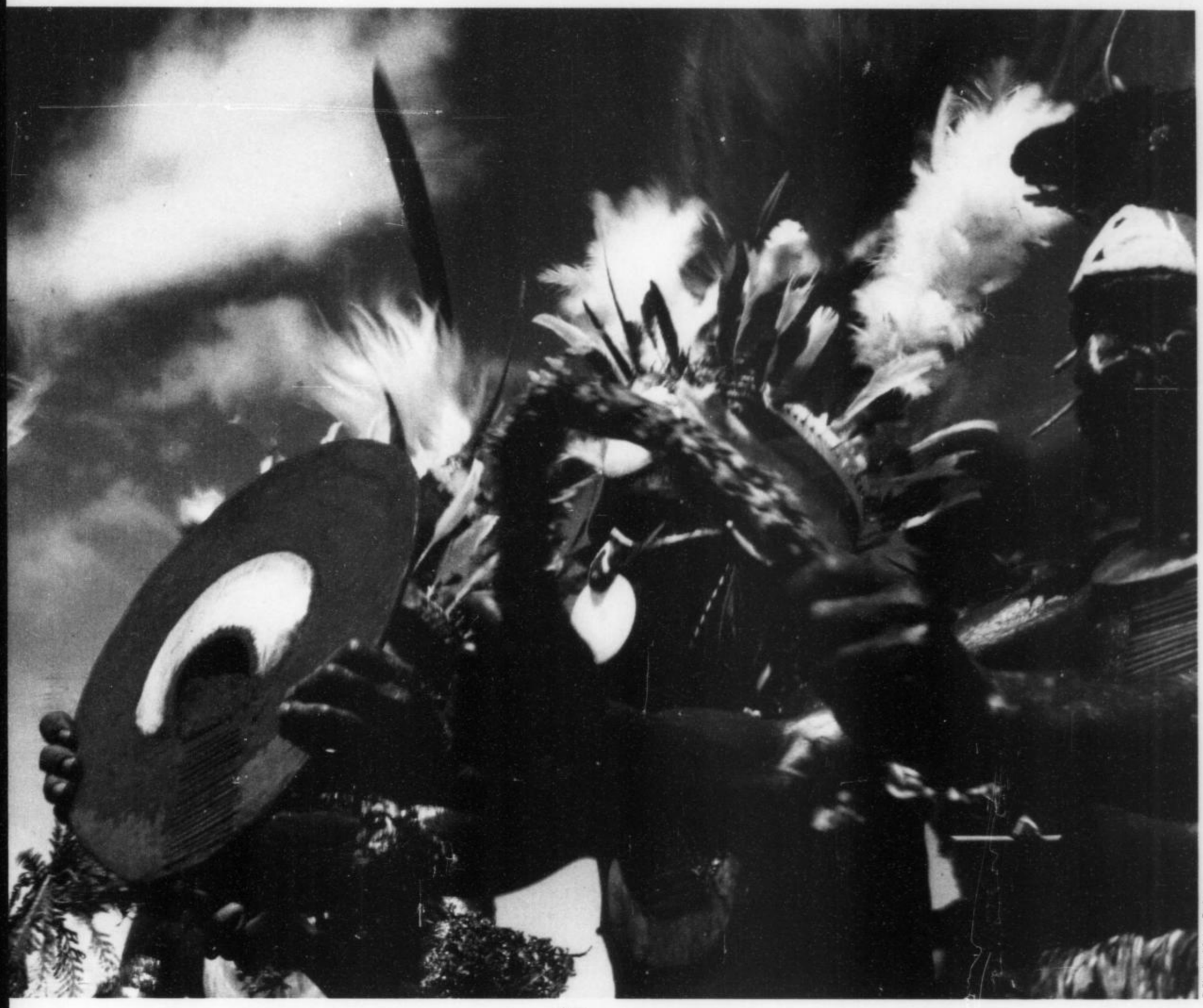
A Sumerian clay tablet used to record numbers of sheep and goats (c. 2350 B.C.).



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Members of the Melpa ethnic group (Papua New Guinea) proffer gifts as part of a traditional form of exchange known as *moka*.

per cent of basic consumption. The wealthiest husbandmen sold only 15-20 per cent of their harvests. This is still a far cry from a market-dominated economy.

An obsolete notion?

Let's take the argument further. Even within economies that are manifestly dependent on the market, prices are less strictly conditioned by the law of supply and demand than economic theory requires. Barely twenty years ago in France, for instance, the fluctuations in fish prices that resulted from varying catch sizes were to a large extent tempered by the need for a stable relationship between the skipper and his crew on the one hand, and the skipper and the fish wholesalers on the other. Similarly, negotiations conducted within the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) provide ample proof that farm prices have nothing to do with market prices. It may even be legitimate to ask whether the prices of goods in general, whatever their nature, are not conditioned by power relationships or, if you like, by the socially recognized value of the individuals, groups, socio-professional categories and nations that produce them rather than by strictly material or economic volumes.

Much recent research has shown that the functioning of actual markets, which hinges on a system of networks (monopolies or oligopolies), has so little connection with what economic theory says about it that some authorities believe that the notion of "the market" as such is now obsolete.

Lastly, it is well known that even in the most capitalist economies actual economic activity often depends less on market requirements than on state and administrative norms. The importance of the market's secondary role is further diminished by the fact that the bulk of social life takes place in the field of interpersonal relationships and not in the sphere of business, politics or administration. And these relationships are governed not by money or the law, but by gifts and debts.

Those who challenge the historic singularity ▸

Bernard Bisson © Sygma, Paris

The logo of GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) in 1993. GATT has since been replaced by the World Trade Organization (WTO).

▶ of the market, on the other hand, believe that no people is unaware of the existence or the possibility of self-interested exchange. Woven into the noble and ceremonial trading process of the Trobriand Islanders of Papua New Guinea (*kula*), for example, is the notion of utilitarian exchange, or swap (*grimwali*). Similarly, according to Marcel Mauss barter was not unknown among the Kwakiutl Indians of the northwest coast of North America, even though they practised potlatch, a ceremonial feast at which chiefs gave presents to enhance their status. If primitive cultures as a whole set such store by gifts, generosity and disinterestedness, it was not because they were unaware of the existence of utilitarian or self-interested motives, but rather through a concern to maintain social cohesion, which would have been jeopardized if venality had not been subordinated to the practice of giving.

Supply and demand in the ancient world

So when did the self-regulated market first appear? Polanyi admits, in *The Livelihood of Man* (1977), that it already existed in Athens in the fifth century B.C. The detailed description of a market economy by Plato, which he calls "a healthy city-state" (*The Republic, II*), establishes beyond all doubt that the inner workings of the market were already well known in his time.

But even three centuries earlier, in China, the prime minister of the state of Ch'i, Kuan Chong (730-645 B.C.), accurately described the mechanism of supply and demand, and asserted that the introduction of fixed prices, even if they were periodically reviewed, "would make price movements less fluid, hinder production and inhibit economic activity".

It may therefore be argued that, while the market can never be reduced simply to an exchange of a purely economic nature or to a set of impersonal relations unconnected with social, cultural or historical factors, there did emerge, very early on, a logical process governing production and consumption which superseded that governing the reproduction of social statuses. The essence of the market resides in the specific momentum which that process imparts to the circulation of goods within a given social system.

To abandon the notion of the market on the pretext that the theoretical model cannot be realized in its pure form would therefore seem to be a mistake. A more fruitful approach is to specify, in each individual case, how trade, the law and making gifts interrelate as ordering structures.

Merchants of the Hanseatic League are shown in the port of Hamburg in this miniature from a manuscript of the city's code of civil law dating from 1487. The Hanseatic League was an association of north German cities and merchants trading in the Baltic (12th-17th centuries).

© AKG Photo, Paris. National Archives, Hamburg

The political interface

It would seem that for centuries before the Western model spread throughout the world the human economy was chiefly notable for its diversity. Varying forms of self-regulated market in a more or less pure form appeared at various points in the world, probably because they could be reached by natural communication routes such as seas and rivers. But in most parts of the world knowledge of that form of market remained incomplete and indirect, and was mediatized by a considerable number of other factors. Some regions remained totally unaware of it until very recently.

Geographical diversity has been accompanied by a historical variability which has meant that the market appears at one moment, only to disappear the next. There is evidence of it in the Roman Empire of the second century A.D., but it seems to wither away completely during the following centuries. Although we find a theoretician of economic liberalism as far back as the seventh century B.C., in the person of Kuan Chong, the actual existence of such a market after the imperial unification of China seems more than doubtful. In Europe, what produced the modern market at the end of the Middle Ages was not large-scale trade in luxury goods, but the alliance of embryonic nation states with bankers and a nascent bourgeoisie. Nation states and the modern market then became coextensive.

It may then be argued that while the mar-

A 16th-century Venetian banker is depicted in this watercolour by Jan II van Grevenbroeck (1731-1807).

© AKG Photo, Paris. Musee Civico Correr, Venice

ket economy exists *potentially*, in other words virtually, in all societies, its *actualization* depends on specific factors peculiar to each of them. They are factors which may be described as political if the term is understood to mean the way in which a society decides, in a conflictual relationship, what form its unity and singularity should take.

Where liberal economists go wrong is when they contend that the market can be set up at will, without any concern for how it contributes to the cohesion or dislocation of societies. The example of the Third World some time ago and the more recent example of the former Soviet Union show that, while there is such a thing as a logical market process, the crucial question is how far it can operate freely. And this is a political, not an economic, issue. ■

ALAIN CAILLÉ
is a French sociologist.

PRE-COLUMBIAN AMERICA

Tlatelolco, shop window of the Aztec empire

BY MARÍA REBECA YOMA MEDINA AND LUÍS ALBERTO MARTOS LÓPEZ

In pre-Columbian Mexico a great market was held in the Aztec city of Tlatelolco. Its size and organization amazed the Spanish conquistadors, who had seen nothing like it in sixteenth-century Europe.

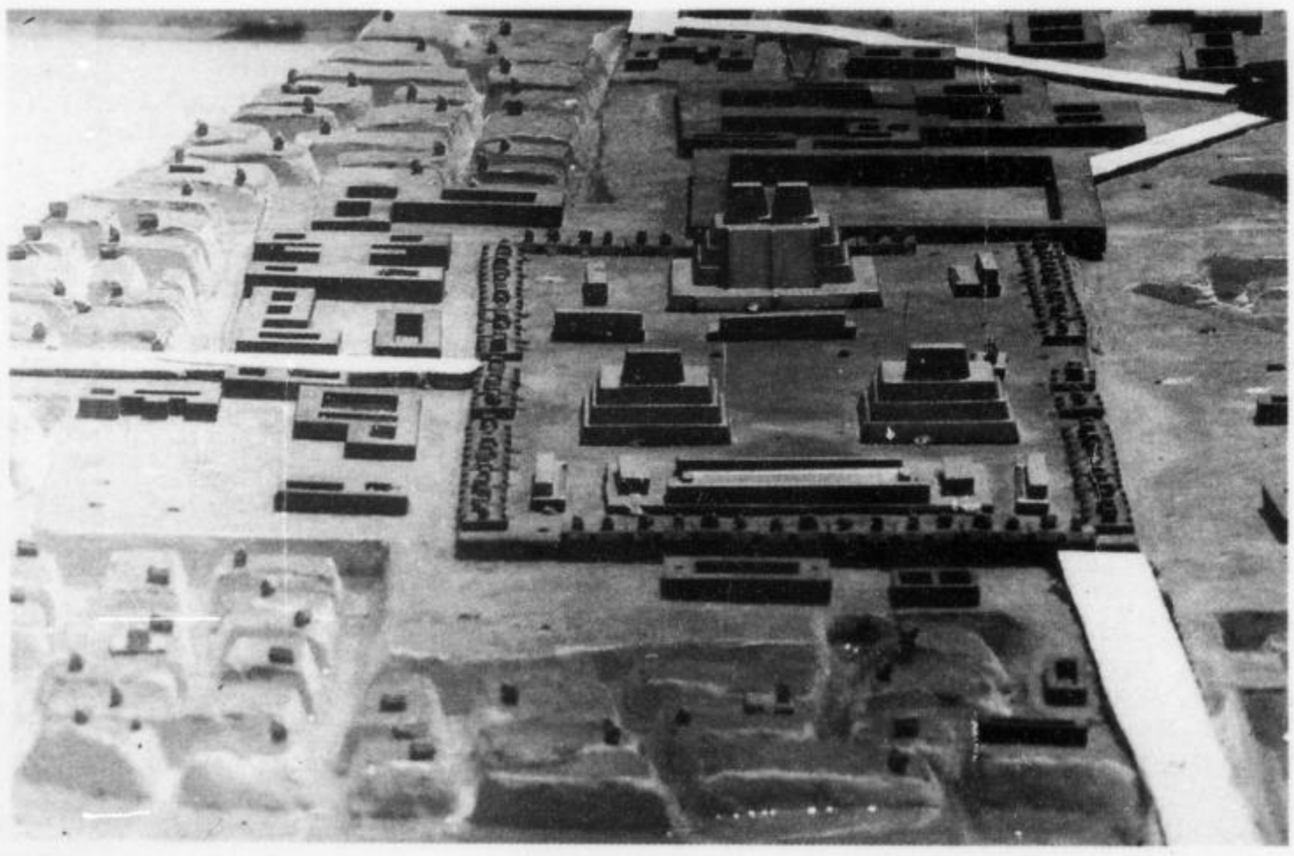
Tlatelolco was a part of the Aztec capital, Tenochtitlán which, so legend has it, was founded on an island in Lake Texcoco in 1325. The site was ideal for exploiting the lake's resources, but seed, fruit, vegetables, building materials and many other essential goods had to be brought in from outside. In 1337, an Aztec splinter group founded an independent city, Tlatelolco, on an island north of Tenochtitlán. The two cities soon became rivals. Tlatelolco's strategic position and the extraordinary business acumen of its inhabitants were such that it acquired a formidable commercial reputation.

A market suburb

At first the market of Tlatelolco dealt exclusively in primary products, but economic and social development slowly encouraged the growth of trade in luxury goods. This became so important that an institution specializing in long-distance trade was set up. It was known as the *Pochtecayotl* and set up a trading network that reached as far as the provinces of the Mayan empire.

In 1473, after a war in which no quarter was given, Tlatelolco was defeated in battle by an army from Tenochtitlán. Overnight the proud city became a suburb of Tenochtitlán. In view of the market's reputation and size, however, the victors decided to encourage its expansion by transporting to it a wide variety of rare products from other cities and regions of the Aztec empire.

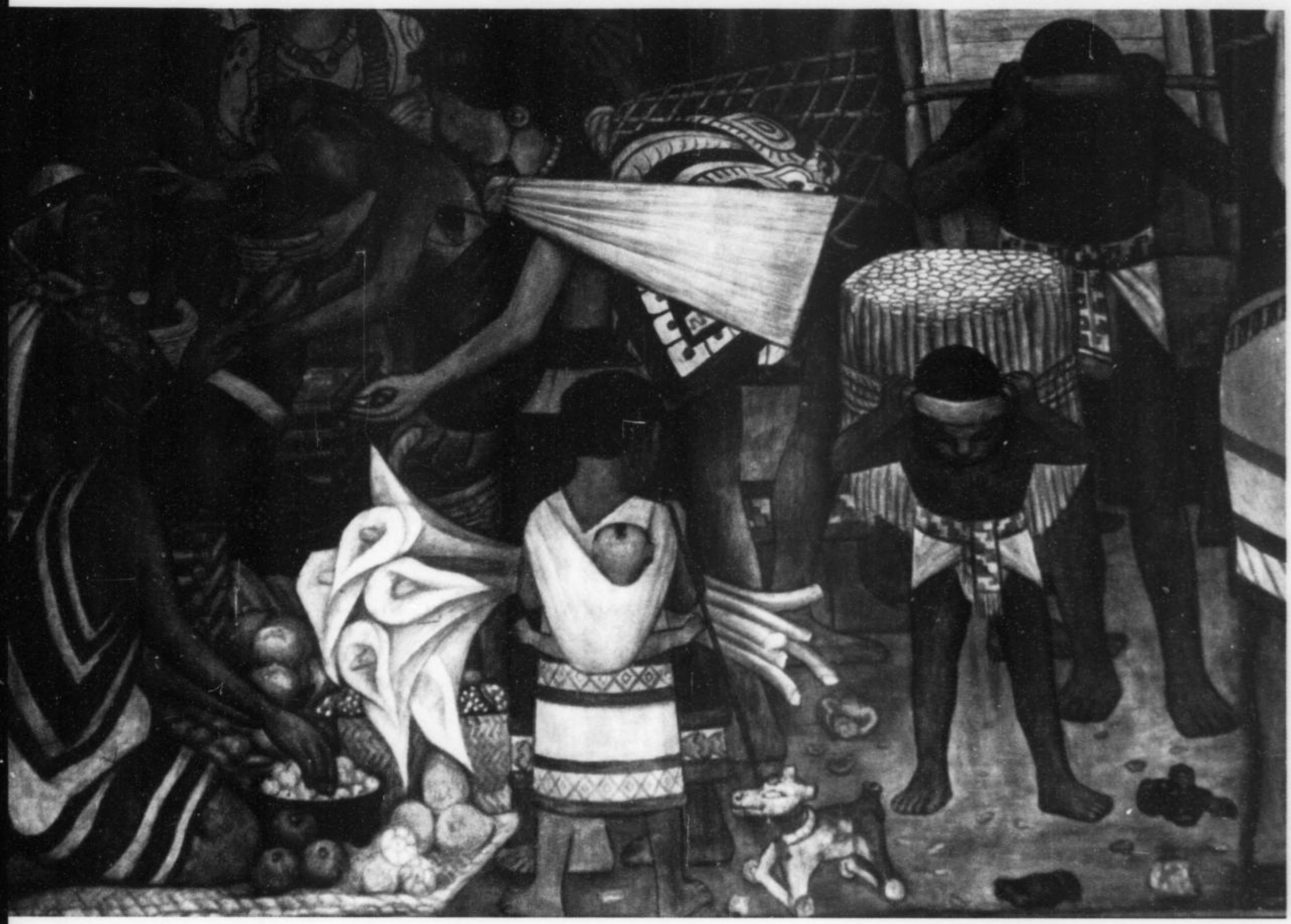
A model of the city of Tlatelolco.



© M. R. Yoma Medina and L. A. Martos López, Mexico

The conquistadors' amazement

When the Spanish conquered Mexico, the market of Tlatelolco was at the height of its prosperity. Contemporary Spanish chroniclers describe how the market place was located to the east of the city's great ceremonial enclosure on a vast square esplanade with sides 200 metres long, fully paved and level



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The capital of the Aztec empire, Tenochtitlán, stood on the site of what is now Mexico City. Its rival city, Tlatelolco, eventually became a suburb of the great metropolis. Scene from life in Tenochtitlán (above) is a detail from a series of murals by the Mexican painter Diego Rivera (1886-1957). The paintings, which illustrate the history of Mexico, are in the National Palace, Mexico City.

and surrounded by arcades housing shops. At the centre of the square was the *momoztli*, a kind of truncated stepped pyramid which was used for celebrations, ceremonies and other public events.

Hernando Cortés, the Spanish conqueror of Mexico, wrote that "This city has many squares where trade and commerce go on all the time. One square is twice the size of Salamanca and surrounded with arcades that more than 70,000 people pass through every day, buying and selling."

Admirably sited near the quay of La Lagunilla, where boats laden with merchandise tied up, the market was also joined to the mainland by three causeways.

As the shop window of the Aztec world, Tlatelolco market offered its customers an amazing variety of exotic products from the four corners of the empire—fruit, animals, medicines, cloth, hides, pottery, instruments, tools and materials of all sorts. It also provided many services: public baths, cafés, barber shops, porters and slave markets.

Cacao currency

The merchants, known officially as *tlamacaque*, were generally also the producers. Middlemen known as *regatonería*, who bought cheap and sold at a profit, did not appear until the colonial period.

Barter was the normal practice, but some commodities also served as currency. Cacao was grown for this purpose in certain parts of the empire, with the consequence that its production was strictly controlled by the government. The basic unit was the bean for inexpensive items and the sack of 8,000 beans (*xiquipiles*) for expensive items.

Handkerchief-sized squares of cotton known as *quachtli* were also used as currency. They came in three sizes, equalling 65, 80 and 100 cocoa beans respectively. A canoe was worth a *quachtli* of 100 beans. A slave ▸

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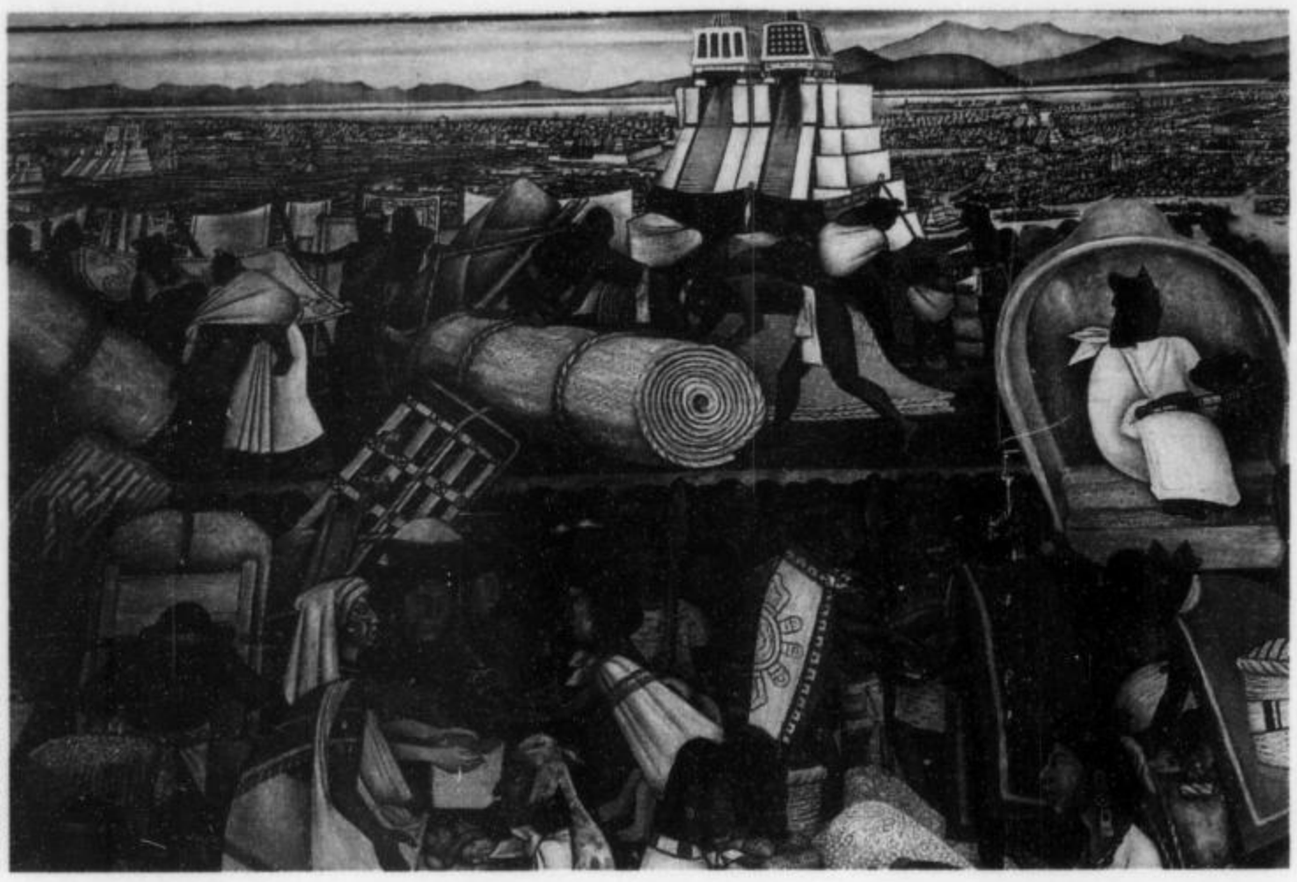
and
LUÍS ALBERTO MARTOS LÓPEZ
are Mexican archaeologists.



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Trade in Tenochtitlán, capital of the Aztec empire. Detail from a mural painting by Diego Rivera in the National Palace, Mexico City.

▶ who could sing was worth 30 *quachtlis*, and an excellent singer and dancer could fetch 40 *quachtlis*, or 4,000 cocoa beans.

Gold dust was another form of payment. It was poured into feather quills, whose value was based on their length and diameter. Small change came in the form of small, thin, T-shaped copper coins, nuggets of gold, copper or pewter, chips of jade and even the red shell from a mollusc now known as the spondylus.

These trading activities obeyed well-established laws and rules, for the market, like other institutions in pre-Columbian Mexico, functioned on a "correct and fair" (*in qualli, in yectli*) basis. No business could be transacted outside the market area, where each merchant was allotted a place corresponding to the nature of his wares. Lengths of rope and receptacles of various capacities were standardized and used to measure quantities. The price of each article was fixed in advance, and any merchant caught cheating on measures or price was severely punished.

There was a chamber where twelve judges sat in permanent session to ensure fair dealing and settle differences. Superintendents regularly went on rounds to maintain security and prevent fraud.

When they founded Mexico City, the Europeans created two new markets but neither ever attained the size or the splendour of Tlatelolco. But Tlatelolco did not survive the Spanish conquest. ■

A gigantic emporium

"Let us begin with the dealers in gold, silver and precious stones, feathers, cloaks and embroidered goods, and male and female slaves. . . . Next there were those who sold coarser cloth, and cotton goods and fabrics made of twisted thread, and there were chocolate merchants with their chocolate. In this way you could see every kind of merchandise to be found anywhere in New Spain, laid out in the same way as goods are laid out in my own district of Medina del Campo, a centre for fairs, where each line of stalls has its own particular sort. So it was in this great market. There were those who sold sisal cloth and ropes and the sandals they wear on their feet, which are made from the same plant. All these were kept in one part of the market, in the place assigned to them, and in another part were skins of tigers and lions, otters, jackals and deer, badgers, mountain cats, and other wild animals, some tanned and some untanned, and other classes of merchandise.

"There were sellers of kidney-beans and sage and other vegetables and herbs in another place, and in yet another they were selling fowls, and birds with great dewlaps [turkeys], also rabbits, hares, deer, young ducks, little dogs and other such creatures. Then there were the fruiterers; and the women who sold cooked food, flour and honey cake, and tripe, had their part of the market. Then came pottery of all kinds, from big water-jars to little jugs, displayed in its own place, also honey, honey-paste and other sweets like nougat. Elsewhere they sold timber too, boards, cradles, beams, blocks, and benches, all in a quarter of their own.

"But why waste so many words on the goods in their great market? If I describe everything in detail I shall never be done. Paper, which in Mexico they call *amal*, and some reeds that smell of liquidambar, and are full of tobacco, and yellow ointments and other such things, are sold in a separate part. Much cochineal is for sale too, under the arcades of that market, and there are many sellers of herbs and other such things. . . .

"I am forgetting the sellers of salt and the makers of flint knives, and how they split them off the stone itself, and the fisherwomen and the men who sell small cakes made from a sort of weed which they get out of the great lake, which curdles and forms a kind of bread which tastes rather like cheese. They sell axes too, made of bronze and copper and tin, and gourds and brightly painted wooden jars. . . ."

Bernal Díaz del Castillo

The Conquest of New Spain (1632).
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ITALY

The merchants of Venice

BY DONATELLA CALABI

The Rialto Bridge, originally made of wood, was rebuilt several times over the centuries. In the second half of the 15th century it had a drawbridge in the centre to let sailing boats through. It can be seen (above) in Vittore Carpaccio's *Miracle of the Relic of the Cross* (1494).

As early as the twelfth century there was a flourishing commercial district in the cluster of islands divided by a canal which we now call Venice. It developed on a site where the land was higher than elsewhere, affording protection against floods.

Three centuries later, this district—the Rialto—had become the financial nerve centre of the Venetian Republic. Its tightly woven urban fabric contained many state administrative offices. A public clock tolled the hours of finance and business.

In the night of 10 January 1514 fire swept through the Rialto, reducing much of it to ashes. It spread through the wooden warehouses packed with merchandise and destroyed immense amounts of public and private treasure. Rebuilding took almost twenty years.

By the mid-sixteenth century the Rialto ▸

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Piazza San Giacomo di Rialto in Venice (1730), by the Venetian painter Antonio Canal, better known as Canaletto. A market was held in the square.

▶ was a busy dockland area. Trading activities, business premises, government buildings and banks were concentrated around the little church of San Giacomo (reputedly the oldest in Venice) and its adjacent square.

At the foot of a wooden bridge, the first to be built across the Grand Canal, were many offices. Just opposite the public scales, cells awaited those who tried to cheat on their taxes or flout the property laws. On the *Riva del Vino* and the *Riva del Ferro* (the Wine and Iron Quays), thronged with barges laden with wine, oil, iron, salt and flour, stood the Land Customs House, the Wine Toll House and various valuers' offices which, dark and poky though they were, were well situated to supervise water-borne traffic.

Not far away was the great flour warehouse set up in the thirteenth century and run by private officials on the state's behalf. There was a small portico beneath which sacks of oats and corn were unloaded. The *Ruga degli Orefici* (Goldsmiths' Street), which led to the Rialto bridge, contained jewellers' shops, as well as drapers' stalls in a long building known as the *Drapperia.* Merchants selling Tuscan cloth were based in the Rialto Nuovo square behind the *Drapperia.*

A number of magistrates' offices were also situated at the foot of the bridge. Beneath an open portico nobles and merchants transacted business, and magistrates regulated the mooring of boats and the sale of merchandise. The *Camerlenghi di Comun*, magistrates responsible for state funds, officiated in an adjoining building.

The square of San Giacomo was the hub of the Rialto and the place where international contracts were negotiated. On the ground floor of a nearby building were money-changers and, later, counters where contracts were drawn up. In the upper storeys vaulted rooms contained depositaries and the apartments of public inspectors known as *Provveditori.* In one nearby street, lined by the ironwork gratings of notaries' offices, were the headquarters of the marine insurance authorities. In another were furriers. Two more contained shops selling cheese, basketwork and rope.

On a vast quayside area built on piles over the Grand Canal were the herb market (*Erbaria*), the fruit market (*Fruttaria*) and other specialized emporia, and a mooring for members of the nobility. To spare the neighbourhood the smell of fish, the *Pescharia* (the fish market) was banished from San Giacomo square. The rest of the Rialto consisted of a few houses, warehouses and shops, *tabernae* where the many foreign merchants received hospitality and other inns frequented by prostitutes.

A few reminders of the Rialto's historic importance as a hub of trade between East and West still survive. The *Stagiera pubblica* (public scales) at the foot of the Rialto bridge and the *Pietra del bando* (a pink granite column where the decrees of the Republic were read out) on San Giacomo square are still used.

The architect commissioned to rebuild the district after the fire of 1514, Antonio Abbondi, known as Scarpagnino, made the Rialto a more homogeneous and less congested district, as we can see in his Old Buildings (*Fabbriche Vecchie*), formerly the headquarters of the superintendants of trade, navigation and supplies. The trend towards greater regularity in architecture and town planning culminated, around the middle of the sixteenth century, in Jacopo Sansovino's New Buildings (*Fabbriche Nuove*), which follow the curve of the Grand Canal.

The finishing touch to the integration of the trading centre into the city was made in 1587 when the decision was taken to rebuild the old wooden bridge in stone. ■

DONATELLA CALABI,
of Italy, is a specialist in urban history.

BRAZIL

Open market or closed shop?

Markets held on sugar plantations often enabled the owner to tighten control over his workforce

BY MARIE-FRANCE GARCIA-PARPET

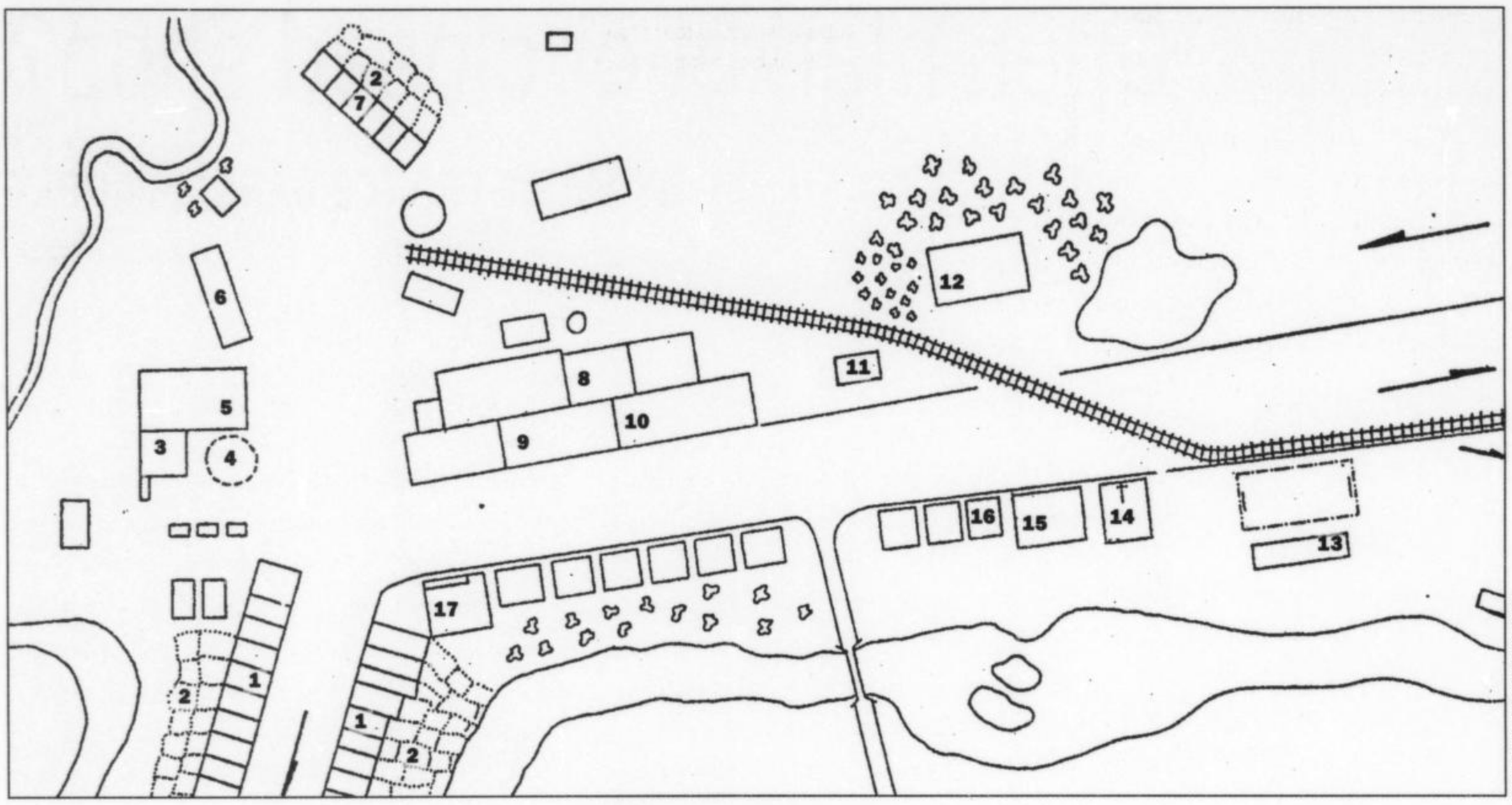
In 1938 the owner of Serro-Azul sugar plantation in Brazil's Pernambuco state set up a market on his estate. Typical of many that were established on plantations in the sugar-producing region of north-eastern Brazil, the market came into existence at a time of large-scale expansion at Serro-Azul triggered by the introduction of modern refinery techniques. The resulting changes made the master, who until then had personally supervised work in the cane fields, more remote from the *moradores*, the labourers who lived on his estate. Power came to be exercised by intermediaries, the managers of the plantation's various domains.

The master set up the market because he wanted to reproduce on his larger and more complex plantation the atmosphere of the smaller world that had been centred on the old steam mill. The market would be a place where the people who worked on the plantation could meet at regular intervals. Like the church, the cinema and the school, it would act as a focus for social life.

A site was found for the market in the settlement which had grown up around the refinery, which was itself marooned in the midst of an immense 14,000-hectare expanse of sugar cane fields. There was no regular means of transport to the nearest town, Palmares, 25 kilometres away. The settlement consisted of the *casa grande*—the master's imposing residence, the comfortable homes of the refinery managers and office workers, ▸

A refinery and workers' dwellings on a sugar plantation in northeastern Brazil.

© Gustavo Moura, Brazil



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Layout of the Serro-Azul refinery

1. Workers' dwellings
2. Plots of land
3. Covered market
4. The market square
5. Spare parts warehouse
6. Fertilizer shed
7. Dwellings of *moradores* (cane cutters)
8. Distillery
9. Factory
10. Sugar cane shed
11. Offices
12. *Casa Grande* (the owner's house)
13. School
14. Church
15. Cinema
16. The manager's house
17. *Barracão* (store)

▸and the little shacks in which the workers and some of the *moradores* lived (most of the latter lived out in the cane fields).

The market was held on Saturday evenings and Sunday mornings. At first glance it seemed like a market in any other small town. The same foodstuffs (fruit, vegetables, meat, manioc flour, clothes and household linen) were on sale and it was divided up in lots in the same way. However, a sharp eye might have noted that there were no cattle or pack animals in the market. Stock-rearing was the privilege of small, independent producers.

The company store

People with goods to sell could come from outside the estate, but most of them were from the plantation—*moradores* with produce from their plots of land, refinery workers, women office staff and labourers. Each vendor was assigned a pitch by the master or the market superintendent. This arrangement could be rescinded at any moment, for whereas in towns the right to set up a market stall is normally paid for in the form of a municipal tax, here it was a reward for a loyal *morador,* like the grant of a plot of land on which to grow a few vegetables.

The customers were *moradores* from nearby domains, refinery workers and employees' wives. It would never have crossed the minds of people from outside the plantation to do their shopping at Serro-Azul. Prices were not very competitive with those in town. This was above all a place where the plantation-owner could show that he was the boss. All the people who lived on the plantation patronized the Serro-Azul market, but the managerial staff only went there when they had no time to go to the town.

"We buy at Serro-Azul because we have to," people said. "There's nothing else we can do; but it's not a market, it's a *barracão,* a company store." For both the cane field workers (the poorest of whom were not even allowed into the market) and the refinery workers the market was a symbol of their subjugation. The plantation managers, who rode through the market on horseback, talked down from the saddle to any *moradores* they wanted to see. The presence of the master and his family was "natural" because his house was so near.

Unlike farmers from the region, *moradores* and workers could only buy and sell during "free" time (granted at the owner's discretion) from their work on the plantation.

An instrument of control

Traders from outside the estate were hawkers and small producers who had already worked on the plantation on a seasonal basis. They owned small plots of land in the surrounding region, and made ends meet in this way. The owner was well disposed towards

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them because during the harvest they had lived in the outhouses of the refinery and had assimilated the rules of the big plantation. They all knew him and greeted him in the marketplace.

Officially the market came under the municipality of Palmares, but it was the plantation-owner who fixed the time and place for business and oversaw the distribution of produce for the *barracão*. Meat, dried fish, oil and coffee on sale at the *barracão* could not be sold by outsiders. The market superintendent who collected the stand taxes on behalf of the municipality was a functionary but he was also the master's right-hand man.

The master thus controlled every square inch of the market without needing to be physically present. By providing an opportunity to buy goods on the estate, he could supervise trade and social life on the plantation, keep tabs on the financial situation of his *moradores*, control their relations with the outside world and restrain alcohol abuse and fighting. The market tightened his links with the workers and asserted his power over them.

The existence of a market on the plantation did not give the *moradores*, labourers or employees an opportunity to achieve autonomy from the landowner. Bringing people together was a gift to the community in return for which the community was kept

Market day on a plantation in northeastern Brazil

© Marie-France Garcia-Parpet, Paris

under the owner's vigilant eye. Although strictly speaking the market was not directly controlled by the land-owner, it was organized so that it corralled the people who lived on the plantation into an area dominated by him, narrowed their mental horizons and isolated them from the world without any need to draw up formal regulations or even build a fence around the plantation.

This was how things were until the day when traditional relationships on the plantation finally came to an end. In the 1970s, when we carried out the survey on which this article is based, the Serro-Azul market was winding down. Most of the *moradores* did their shopping in town, where goods were cheaper and they could meet all kinds of people, leave a closed world and have access to a union. The focus of social life had moved from inside the plantation to outside.

When the flow of exchange (work, medical aid, protection) between master and *morador* ceased to have the trappings of a reciprocal gift and became a more objective employer-employee relationship as a result of unionization, plantation owners gradually disengaged from their obligations to their workers.

The lesson of Serro-Azul is that the concept of the market does not always go hand in hand with freedom. ■

An abandoned shop on a plantation in northeastern Brazil.

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AFRICA

A tradition of cross-border trade

BY ALIX SERVAIS AFOUDA

The Lake Chad basin has always been a hub of commerce that turns a blind eye to political frontiers

ALIX SERVAIS AFOUDA, of Benin, is an agronomist and geographer.

The Lake Chad basin has always been a hub of long-distance trade between the Sahara Desert, the forest regions of the Gulf of Guinea and the plateau of Central Africa.

With the creation of nation states in post-colonial Africa trading activity was concentrated along interstate borders. Frontier towns and markets became administrative centres and the focal points of regional trade.

Merchants settled in these towns but did not cut off contact with the Hausa, Kanuri, Fulani, Shewa-Arab and other peoples from which they came. They belonged to corporations that dated back to the days when caravans plied through the region and were governed by regulations specific to each ethnic

Above, a caravan transporting salt in Niger.

Below right, a market in Chad.

group. They traded mainly in local subsistence products such as millet, sorghum, rice and tubers, imported rice, flour and wheat, cattle, sheep and goats, and products manufactured locally or in other countries.

The transnational nature of their activities brought the merchants into contact with foreign-exchange dealers, brokers, guides and transporters as well as officials and other middlemen. But the far-reaching ramifications of their trade, the ambivalent nature of certain business centres straddling the border between two states, and the practice of corruption and smuggling made it possible for merchants to set up trade circuits that eluded state supervision.

Long-distance trade

There are two kinds of trading circuit. Locally grown farm produce is traded within small-scale networks based on towns and markets held at regular intervals. This type of trade may involved people living on either side of a state frontier. There are also long-distance circuits of transnational trade in locally produced or imported agricultural and manufactured goods along routes linking Nigeria, Cameroon, Niger and Chad.

The volume and nature of trade between these four countries is determined by three main factors:

- Complementary needs resulting from ecological differences. Millet, sorghum, tubers and cola are imported by Niger and Chad from Nigeria and Cameroon, for example, in exchange for cattle, hides, leather, fish and natron.
- The economic situation in each country. Compared with the other Chad basin countries, Nigeria is an economic giant. Next in size comes Cameroon, followed by Niger and Chad, two landlocked countries of the Sahel which have few development resources. Nigeria's economic might is reflected in the diversity of its industries, its massive output and the fact that over 95 per cent of its export revenues comes from oil.
- Political differences. These are mainly associated with agricultural policies, the regulation of foreign trade and the use of two currencies in the region (the non-convertible Nigerian Naira, and the CFA franc, whose convertibility is guaranteed by the Bank of France).

Irrespective of the enormous losses due to fraud in the different countries, the intensification of regional and cross-border trade in the Chad basin has by and large encouraged the growth of agriculture, a parallel exchange market, transport, crafts and services. In farming alone, by allowing certain areas to sell off their crop surpluses and others to reduce their subsistence crop deficits, this trade has become a factor in regional food security. The way in which food security stocks are regulated via the different trade circuits shows that the region's economy has remained strongly integrated in spite of the way in which national frontiers are drawn.

The Lake Chad basin is a crossroads of sub-regional trade that supplies the whole of Nigeria, Cameroon, Niger and Chad and other countries such as the Central African Republic. Its commercial dynamism is such that a kind of de facto integration is maintained by local populations irrespective of what states might wish. ■

Paul Almasy © AKG Photo, Paris

FRANCE

Friday in Carpentras

An ethnologist describes what happens on market day in a French provincial town

BY MICHÈLE DE LA PRADELLE

Friday is market day in Carpentras. By seven o'clock in the morning the centre of this old town in southeast France, once surrounded by ramparts and today a complex of twisting alleyways and pretty little squares, is already humming with life as some 350 itinerant traders set up their stalls and the local tradespeople lay out their wares on the pavement in front of their shops. Motor traffic is forbidden and a throng of pedestrians is soon pushing its way between the stalls. From amidst a miscellany of foodstuffs, odours and colours, the hawkers shout to make themselves heard above the noise of the crowd.

People do not come to the market at Carpentras for purely economic reasons, since its prices and its wares are pretty much the same as those in the local supermarkets. They come to enjoy the atmosphere, stroll around and meet other people. The market is a temporary melting-pot for North African immigrants from the northern parts of the town, the local bourgeoisie, people from the surrounding countryside and, in summer, passing tourists and Parisians who own houses in the area. As they walk through the town on market day, people visit neighbourhoods where perhaps they would never venture otherwise.

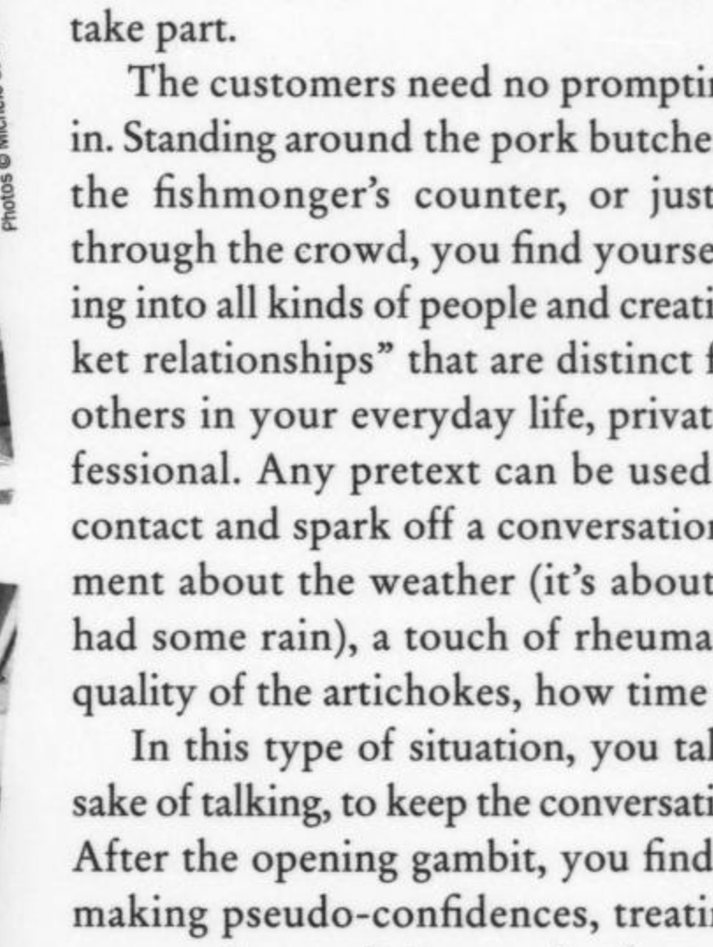
For a few hours the market brings together social groups whose members do not normally communicate because they live in different parts of town and have different ways of life and cultural values. Market traders are the key players in setting up these encounters.

Everything they do is designed to transform making a sale into an event. It is impossible for a customer to make a quick purchase and slip unobtrusively away. The trader sings out the order in a loud voice, lauds the quality of his or her wares, makes nonsense of the usual customer-trader relationship and sets

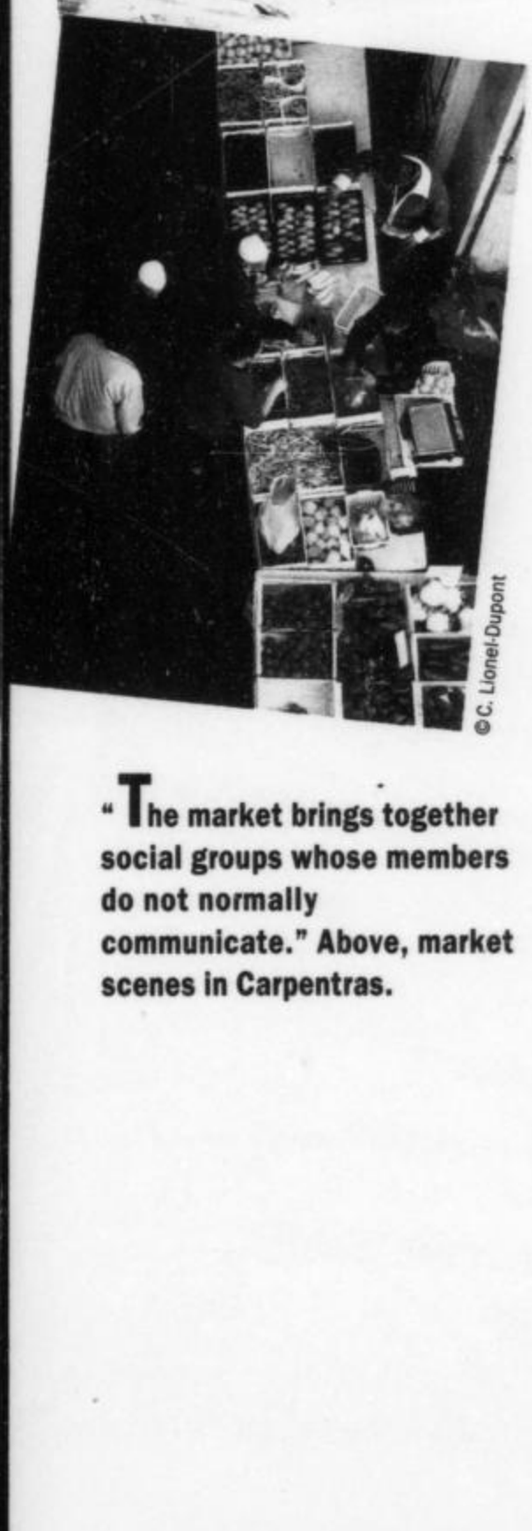
The pig market at Carpentras **(1841), a watercolour by Denis Bonnet.**

P. Chaline © Michèle de la Pradelle. Inguimbert Library, Carpentras

MICHÈLE DE LA PRADELLE
is a French ethnologist.



Photos © Michèle de la Pradelle, Paris



© C. Lionel-Dupont

"The market brings together social groups whose members do not normally communicate." Above, market scenes in Carpentras.

the ball rolling for an exchange of views in which everyone around the stall is free to take part.

The customers need no prompting to join in. Standing around the pork butcher's van or the fishmonger's counter, or just drifting through the crowd, you find yourself bumping into all kinds of people and creating "market relationships" that are distinct from any others in your everyday life, private or professional. Any pretext can be used to make contact and spark off a conversation: a comment about the weather (it's about time we had some rain), a touch of rheumatism, the quality of the artichokes, how time flies. . . .

In this type of situation, you talk for the sake of talking, to keep the conversation going. After the opening gambit, you find yourself making pseudo-confidences, treating someone you have only known for five minutes as an old friend. You stick to generalizations and keep quiet about your real situation, which is often very different from that of the person you are talking to, and avoid subjects such as your children's education, your garden, your house and housework.

Local colour

This sociability is the result of a common sense of belonging to the locality. When you go to the market in Carpentras, you reaffirm or lay claim to a collective identity. The market is one of the town's institutions, and to buy your mullet or your olives there is a way of proving to yourself and of showing to others that you are a local—whether you really are or not. If you want to be "somebody" in France today, you have to be from "somewhere". If you make remarks that show your familiarity with the market—if you ask the butcher whether he still makes a certain kind of paté, for example—people will regard you as a regular. For Parisians who own property in the region, the market is an opportunity to build up their stock of local affiliations.

This sociability cannot be divorced from the historical background of the market, which has been held in the same place on the same day for as far back as anyone can remember. The mere fact of buying your goat cheese and your shoelaces on the Place du Palais (a residence of the Avignon popes in the fourteenth century) has symbolic overtones. But it must be admitted that the traditional character of Carpentras market today is in some ways more apparent than real. A market of travelling stallholders like this one is full of reminders of a world that has disappeared. If you are not careful, the soil on the potatoes and the green sprigs sprouting from the carrots might make you think the hawker picked them only a few hours ago, at dawn in his garden.

A taste of time gone by

The municipal authorities, as well as the customers and the hawkers, also try to recreate the atmosphere of the market as it was in days gone by. The wares are grouped together by categories, as they were when the market was also a wholesale market divided into a corn market, a garlic market, a mulberry leaf market and other small trading posts where the region's craft and farm produce were sold.

The only surviving trace of this old arrangement is the truffle market, the biggest in France. It is attended by truffle brokers and preservers and by "rabassiers"—local people who look for truffles in their spare time with their dogs in the hills around Carpentras. It is a kind of secret ceremony, an unobtrusive sideshow to the main market, but it gives Carpentras market its touch of authenticity.

For a few hours a week at least, the citizens of Carpentras enjoy feeling that they are shopping at a typical market of old Provence. In the name of a shared identity, and under the cover of anonymity they can practise a generalized friendship which is both joyful and feigned and has something in common with *philia*—the friendly spirit which Aristotle regarded as an essential component of a political community. ■

RUSSIA

A puzzling transition

Russian public opinion has mixed feelings about economic reform

BY YURI LEVADA

Michael Lynch © Stock Illustration Source, Paris

After the collapse of the planned economy in the Soviet Union, reforms carried out in a difficult economic environment got a mixed reception from the population. Many feared economic disaster and a massive explosion of popular discontent. Surveys have shown that anxiety about the future among the population peaked at the beginning of 1992.

At the same time many were deluded into believing that privatization of the economy could be easily achieved and could enable the country to develop rapidly. Most inhabitants of the Soviet Union had no idea how market mechanisms and financial structures actually worked, how to exercise the right to property, how to accumulate capital or how to save. Moreover, the political situation and the balance of power within the regime made it impossible to carry out reforms as planned. Changes were made too slowly and chaotically, so that they hurt the majority of the population. It took several years before the early enthusiasms and disappointments sparked by the market economy gave way to a more clear-sighted appraisal and a determination to adjust to new conditions.

Over the last few years public opinion has been divided as to the need to pursue economic reforms leading to a market economy. As the table on page 28 shows, almost half the population has no opinion as to whether or not the reforms should be pursued. The chief supporters of the reforms are the youngest and most educated strata of society living in the cities. These are people to whom the years of reform have given greater opportunities to use their own initiative, and who have remained extremely confident about future changes. The most resolute opponents of continued reforms are the over-fifty-fives, retired people and villagers, in other words those who have lost more than they have gained from the transition to a market economy.

The wealthiest, and especially the new self-styled "businessmen" and "managers", naturally welcome the market economy. Of those in the highest income bracket, 48 per cent are in favour of continued reforms and 17 per cent against, while a mere 20 per cent of those in low-income groups are in favour and 35 per cent are against. However, the great majority of those who have received a university or specialized education want to see reforms continue, even though many of them have experienced a fall in their standard of living since the beginning of the reforms because of

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the crisis in higher education, science and industrial research. Despite that, they remain hopeful that the reforms will succeed.

How fair is privatization?

To judge from data provided by a series of public opinion polls carried out in 1995, 42 per cent of the population regard an economic system based on state planning and distribution as "fairer", while 37 per cent are in favour of a system based on private property and market forces. The rest are don't-knows. (Some 9,600 people were polled.) The opinion of elderly people tips the balance in favour of a planned system.

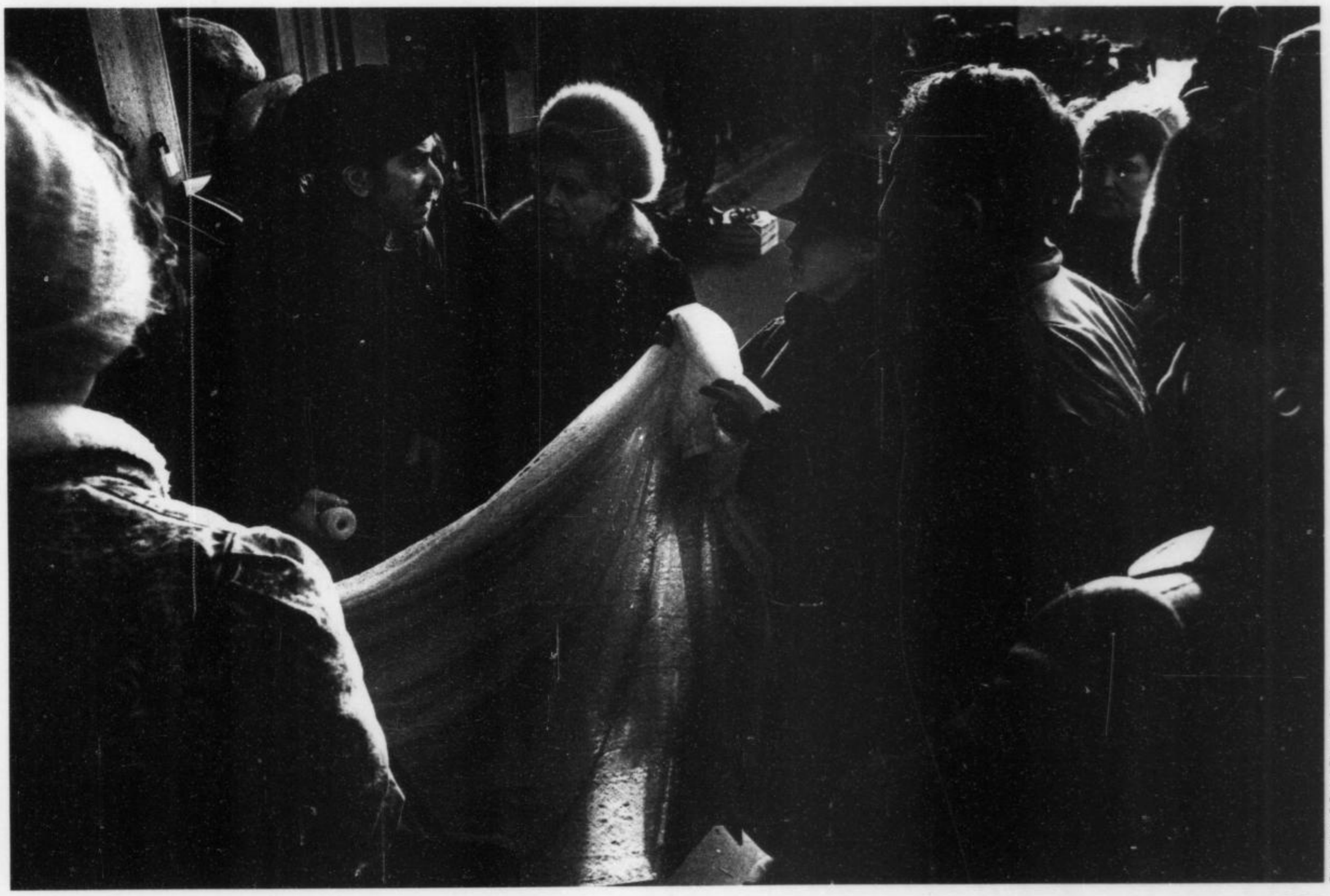
Today 26 per cent of Russians believe that most of their fellow citizens have already adjusted to the changes that have taken place, 29 per cent think they will be able to adjust in the near future, and 32 per cent consider that they will never be able to do so. The remaining 13 per cent gave no definite answer. It is above all the younger, better educated and most active people who are prepared to adjust to the new conditions.

Those who find it hardest to adjust to the changes are people who have difficulty in altering their customary way of life. They consist mainly of people living in Russian villages and small towns, who account for almost two-thirds of the population. The modernization of the farming sector entails massive investment that no one is in a position to make at present. So reforms aimed at steering that sector towards a market economy have run into considerable difficulty and have led to incomprehension and even opposition on the part of much of the rural population. This is why private land ownership, to which democrats and reformers are seeking to give legal status, has the support of city-dwellers but is opposed by most of the rural population.

Most of the population currently regard privatization of companies, banks and other activities as quite normal. Prejudice against wealthy landowners is far less widespread than it was a few years ago. Most people nevertheless feel that the biggest companies and the energy monopoly should remain in the hands of the state. The greatest resentment is directed at the right of foreigners to own land and large companies. Many still fear that foreign capitalists want to appropriate the country's wealth.

It is true that the Russian people's relationship with the market economy goes further ▸

Street vendors in Moscow.



Rob Huibers © Panos Pictures, London

▶ than the subjective opinions and attitudes revealed by many public opinion polls. All those who are experiencing this on-going but very real transition towards a new economic situation are constantly having to define and appraise their position. Let us look at some of the main features of this complex situation.

Coping with transition

In Russia, about one-third of the working population are currently employed by the private sector, and one-sixth by state-owned joint-stock companies. But even the 50 per cent of the working population employed by public bodies and enterprises already live largely in a market economy environment and have to take account of its rules.

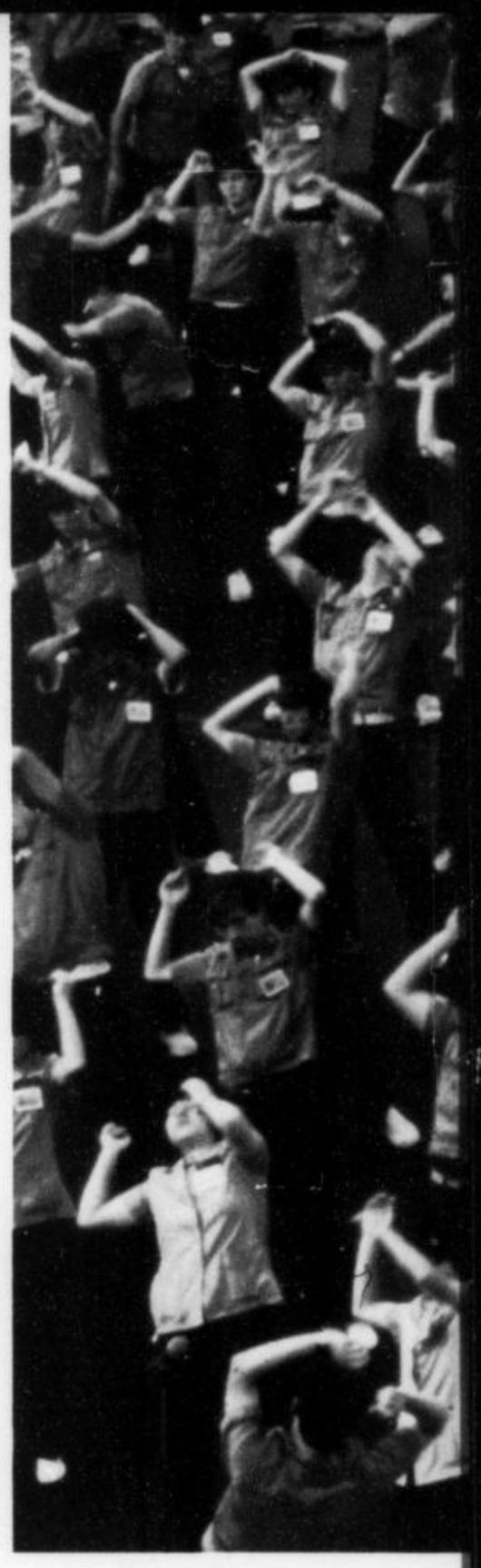
The market economy has almost everywhere put an end to the shortage of consumer goods that was the inevitable characteristic of the planned distribution system. The lack of staple commodities came top of the list of problems that most worried the population at the beginning of the 1990s, whereas today only a small percentage of people (7 per cent of 2,400 interviewees in May 1996) mention such shortages, which now come near the bottom of the list of what are regarded as acute problems. Today, the most serious problems are considered to be phenomena resulting from the "transition to the market economy", such as price rises (68 per cent), crime (59 per cent), unemployment (55 per cent) and falling production (55 per cent). Some 60 per cent of the population feel that the quality of life is not now as high as it was five years ago.

OPINIONS ON THE CONTINUATION OF REFORMS TO PROMOTE A MARKET ECONOMY

	March 92	March 93	April 94	March 95	March 96
For continuing reforms	**47**	**42**	**32**	**27**	**31**
Against continuing reforms	**27**	**20**	**28**	**30**	**26**
Don't know	**26**	**38**	**40**	**43**	**44**

The borders of present-day Russia have opened up to the circulation of people, goods, information and (to a much lesser degree) capital. The situation may be full of contradictions, but it marks an important stage in the transition of the Russian economy and society towards a market economy. Most Russians are in favour of these new opportunities, and 10 per cent of them take advantage of their freedom to go on business trips or holidays outside the borders of the former Soviet Union. At the same time, public opinion closely follows the constant debate in the mass media about the negative aspects of contact with the outside world, such as the flight of capital, the increasing importance of consumer goods, the internationalization of organized crime, and civil service corruption.

Most voters who took part in this year's presidential elections and supported the winning candidate, Boris Yeltsin, came out in favour of retaining the achievements of the reforms and against a return to the past. Almost 80 per cent of those who voted for Yeltsin believe that the majority of the population has already adjusted, or will adjust in the very near future, to the reforms, and only 13 per cent think that this will not happen. Conversely, only 35 per cent of those who voted for the unsuccessful communist candidate think that people will adjust to the changes, while 49 per cent of them believe it to be impossible. For the time being, then, reactions to the reforms remain very clear-cut across the spectrum of society as a whole. ■



In Kagoshima, southwestern Japan, employees of a ceramics factory perform gymnastics at the weekly staff meeting.

The GUM shopping arcade in Moscow.

ISIP © Hoa Qui, Paris

ISHI (P.P.S.) © Rapho, Paris

JAPAN

Company capitalism

BY HIROSHI OKUMURA

Has Japan's market economy reached a turning point?

Companies are the key players in Japan's market economy and are regarded as legal entities in their own right. The main share-holders in large businesses are not individuals but interdependent companies with cross-holdings in each other. I call this system "company capitalism".

Individuals, companies and the state are the three main components of a market economy. A study of this market calls for analysis of the relations between companies and individuals, between companies themselves, and between companies and the state. One feature of Japanese company capitalism is that the volume of trade between companies is far greater than that between companies and individuals, or between companies and the state. This is one of the characteristics of Japanese company capitalism. Furthermore, private enterprise is by far the largest source of the nation's wealth. Businesses have a massive superiority over individuals, which they dominate or "envelop".

On the market for manufactured goods, which is dominated, as in the United States and Europe, by an oligopoly of large corporations, prices, quality and services are imposed by companies on individuals—on what is clearly not an equal footing.

Many products (notably in the automobile and electrical goods sectors) are distributed according to the *keiretsu* system (*keiretsu* are vertically integrated groups of companies). ▶

▸ Manufacturers form *keiretsu* with wholesalers and retailers. They give orders and try to fix prices. The big retailers such as supermarkets compete with this form of distribution by selling at rock-bottom prices, but they keep well in with the manufacturers all the same.

The primacy of the company over the individual is most apparent on the job market. The distinctive features of Japanese management are "a job for life, wages based on length of service, and company unions", but since relations between businesses and individuals are not on an equal footing, the job-for-life system means that the individual is absorbed by the company. Take the question of recruitment. On April 1st each year, all companies hire new graduates at the same time, going on to give them in-house training and teach them the company culture. Each recruit is given a post and then moves around within the company according to its staffing rota. Recruits get "a company" rather than "a job". In this context the market mechanism does not function and the job market is non-existent. The company calls the tune.

In theory the unions act as a counterweight to the company, but Japanese unions are organized within companies, and not grouped by trades or branches. In other words they are not a strong force of opposition, and in fact, companies use unions to implement their staffing and other policies. The basic principle of company capitalism is that the company comes first. The staff is a hundred per cent loyal to the company, and even business chiefs outside the company but associated with it are under its control.

Managers of affiliates meet at their parent company's Kyoto Headquarters.

ISHI (P.P.S.) - Rapho, Paris

Direct transactions are the most common form of trade between businesses. A company chooses a business partner from among a mass of potential partners, and then trading conditions are decided on. This system produces latent competition between businesses, but it cannot be said that the market mechanism functions fully in it.

Big business and the banks

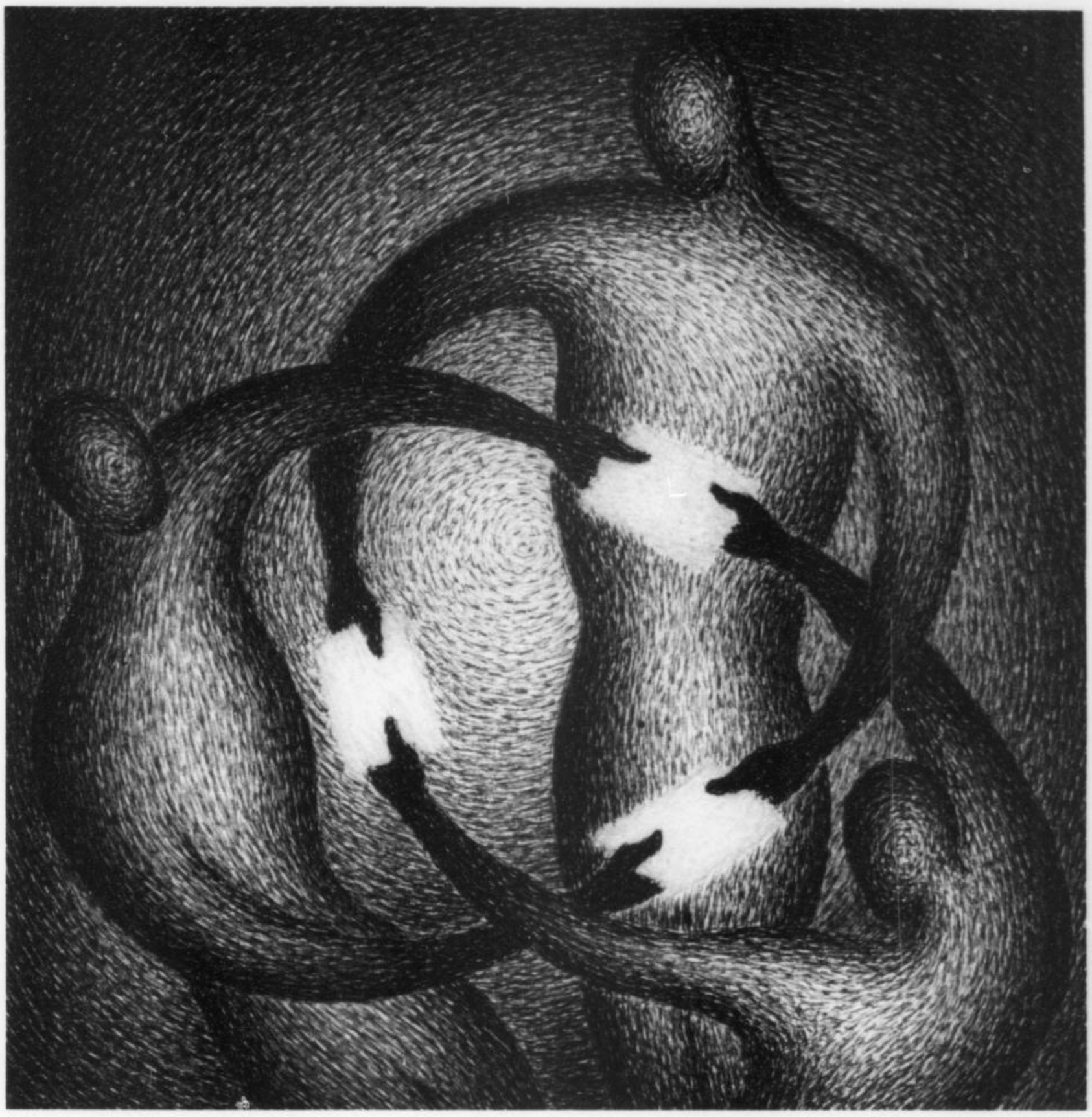
In order to choose their partners in these direct transactions, companies join up in associations of two main kinds: *keiretsu* (groups of affiliated companies) and conglomerates (large industrial groups). Conglomerates are large corporations linked horizontally, each one having many affiliated companies. The companies within each conglomerate are interdependent via cross-holdings. A club of the managing directors of the main companies meets regularly. Business between the companies within the conglomerates is coordinated by *sogo shosha* (trading companies), which play a pivotal role.

Whereas trade within the *keiretsu* results from a unilateral decision by the parent company, in the industrial conglomerates it is carried out between big companies on a reciprocal basis. This system does not totally exclude outsiders nor apply to all transactions, but the fact remains that the mechanism of the market economy as described in neoclassical economic theory does not function here.

"A business without a lead bank does not exist," they say in Japan. As a rule, this bank is the main provider of capital for its business partners, for which it is responsible. If the latter go bankrupt, the bank accepts responsibility for their debts and acquires the bonds it has issued. It is also a major shareholder in these businesses, which have shares in the bank. So this is a system of cross-holdings.

For the *keiretsu*, the conglomerates and the lead banks, share ownership is the best way of bringing companies together. In Japan, banks and finance companies own almost 70 per cent of the shares in all companies quoted on the stock market. Share ownership is limited by an anti-trust law, however. The banks are not entitled to hold more than 5 per cent of the shares issued by a company.

Companies hold shares in each other in order to exercise mutual control and create the conditions for long-term trading between



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"Japan is said to be ruled by a troika comprising the political world, the higher civil service and the financial world."

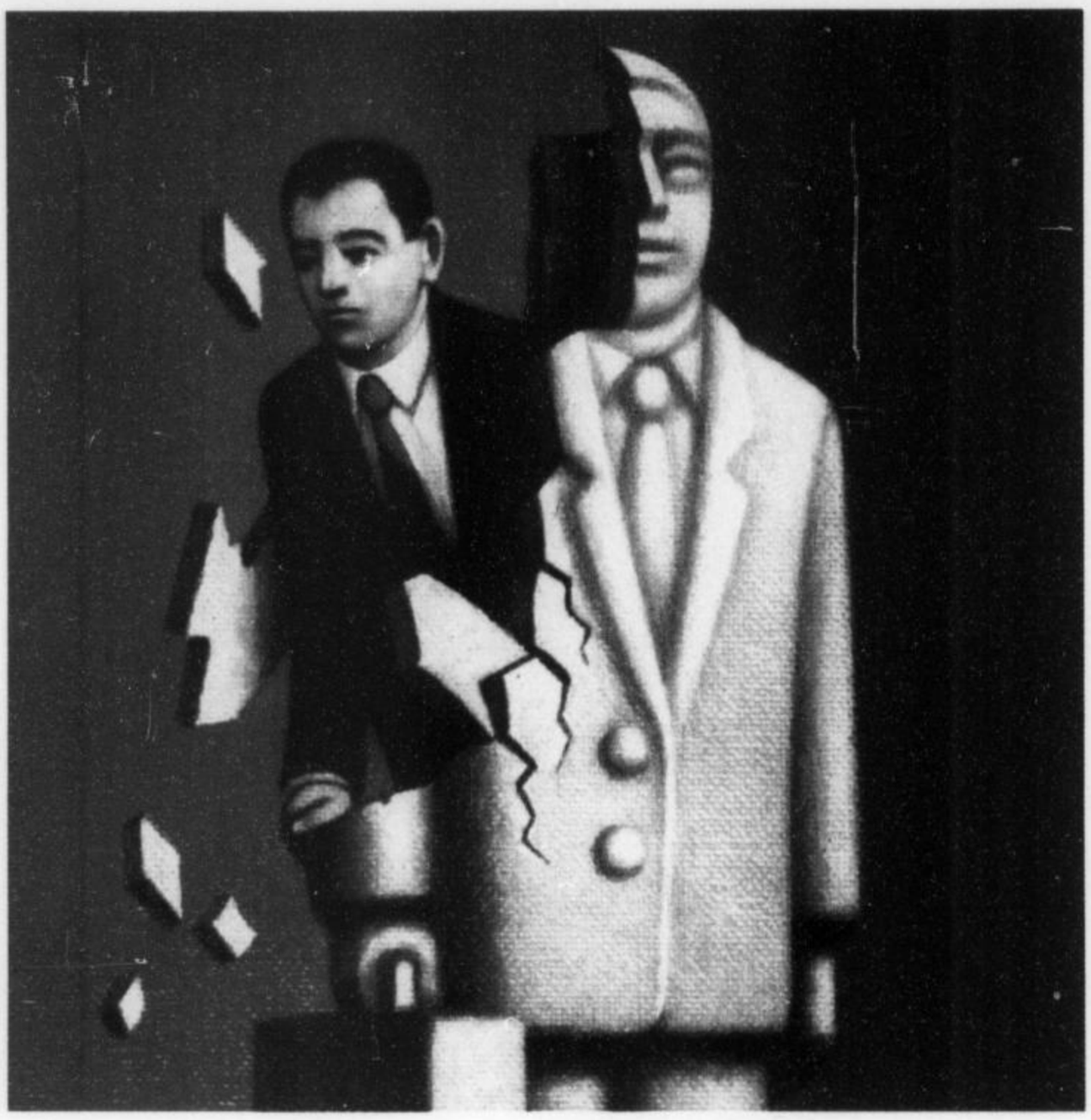
them ("compulsory" trading which flies in the face of the principles of the market economy). But this is also a way of preventing take-overs through share purchases by outside companies. After the liberalization of capital movements in the 1960s, big Japanese companies organized large-scale stability operations by their shareholders in order to prevent foreign capital from taking over their companies.

Business and the state

These operations had some harmful effects on the health of companies and particularly made it more difficult to restructure them. The banks and the big companies were overcome by a fever of speculation in shares and land. A monetary "bubble" appeared and grew until it burst in the early 1990s when there was a sudden collapse in share and land prices. The decline of Japanese company capitalism had begun.

Japan is said to be ruled by a troika comprising the political world, the higher civil service and the financial world. In this context, the financial world means the grouping of big business leaders, who dominate the economy and are linked to the state, which has made possible the strong growth of the Japanese economy by giving priority to business and setting up many aid and protection policies.

This policy to encourage the development of private enterprise in the finance, services and other sectors has often been implemented via administrative directives, independent of legislation, and this has given Japanese bureaucrats far-reaching powers. The troika system has led to financial support being given to a political party and to appointments for top civil servants in the private sector, where they embark on a second career. These links have led to collusion between politicians, higher civil servants and business, which has given rise to scandals and corruption (and is, in principle, alien to the mechanism of a market economy). ▶



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▶ Compared to countries with a socialist tradition such as the Soviet Union and China, and to the countries of Western Europe, the economic clout of nationalized industries in Japan is relatively light and the state sector is less important. In this respect the Japanese economy is a market economy and not a planned economy. It could, however, be described as a market economy directed by the state since private business is so closely tied to the state.

A turning point

In addition to these internal contradictions are the problems raised by the direct investment made by Japanese companies abroad—in America, Europe and Asia—in the 1970s and 1980s. Japan's trade surplus with the United States has also become a major political problem, and there have been many cases of friction between Japan and the United States in the field of co-operation on Japanese-American structural problems.

Company capitalism is showing its limits. Where relations between business and individuals on the market for manufactured goods are concerned, oligopolistic domination is becoming hard pressed, notably because of the increasing amount of goods imported from abroad. As far as the labour market is concerned, the job-for-life system and Japanese-style recruitment are starting to lose ground. The unions are still company unions and they continue to give priority to the company, but their members are less and less interested and the rate of unionization is going down.

In relations between companies, it can be seen that the justification for *keiretsu* is getting weaker and that companies are starting to leave them. The need for conglomerates is also starting to weaken now that industrial structures are moving away from the model of heavy industry and the chemical industry. Even the cross-holding system is becoming less widespread.

The institution of the lead bank is also running out of steam. Since the 1980s, the business finance system has diversified. Cross-holding by companies is starting to be a handicap for industrialists, and some companies are selling their shares to generate profit.

With regard to relations between the state and business, deregulation has been a major government trend in the 1990s. After the appearance of splits in the structure of the politics-civil service-finance troika (political scandals, end of single-party domination), it became increasingly difficult to preserve the control system which these three entities exercised by mutual support.

How will the Japanese-style market economy develop? Towards an "Anglo-Saxon" type of market economy or towards something entirely new? I would be inclined to say that the twenty-first century will not be an age of big companies or of joint stock companies. Companies will not disappear as such. They will still even be the mainspring of the economy. But because industrial structures will be increasingly different from those of heavy industry and the chemical industry, big companies involved in mass production will lose ground to small and medium-sized businesses headed by industrialists of a different kind. I see them as being efficiently interlinked by networks and not by the *keiretsu* and conglomerate system.

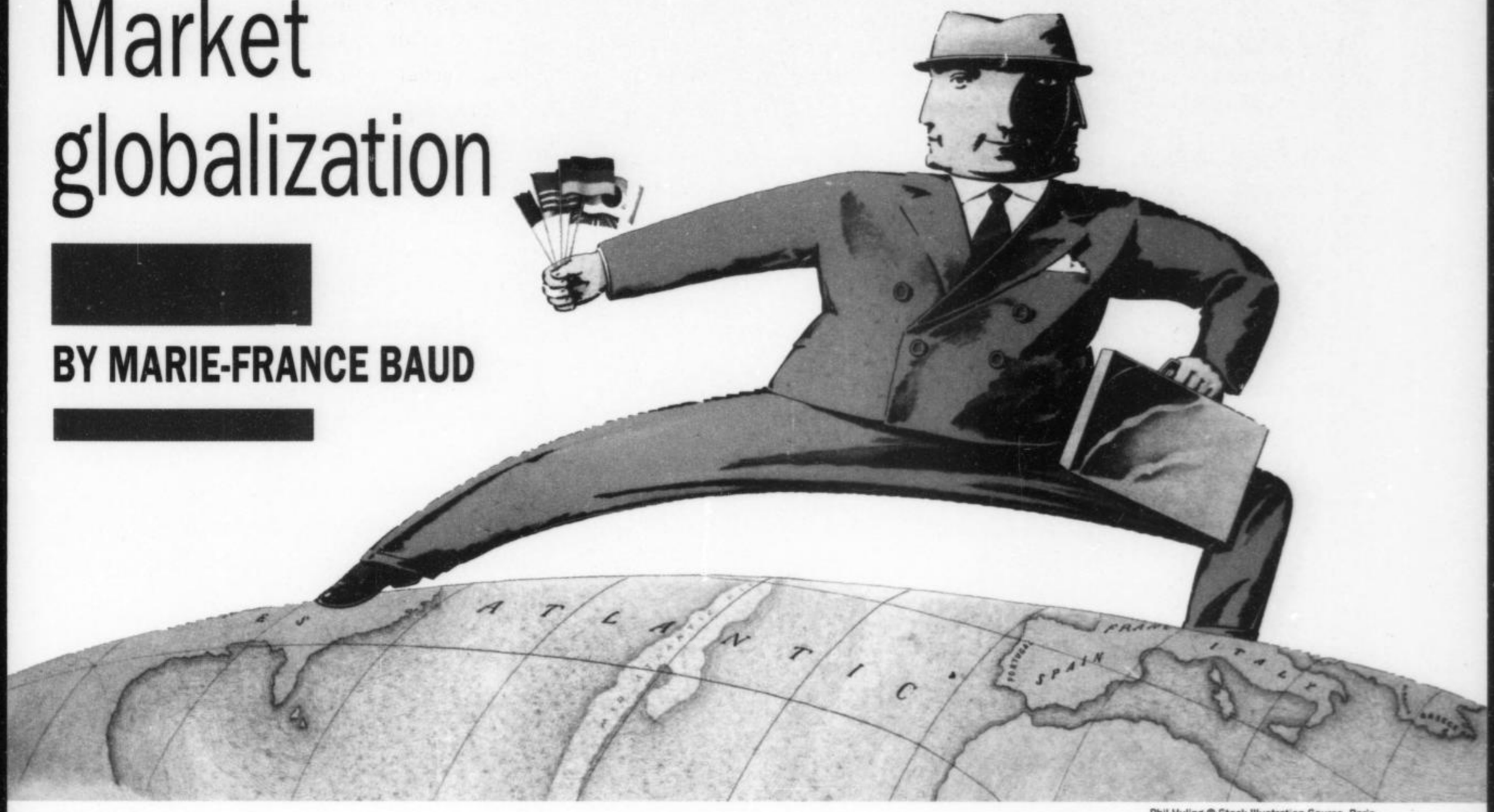
Individualism, an unusual phenomenon for Japan, will emerge in relations between businesses and people and replace the principle of company supremacy. A co-operative structure or perhaps some radically different system may take the place of joint stock companies. These companies will not disappear, but maybe they will have to coexist with many other forms of business. ■

"Individualism, an unusual phenomenon for Japan, may emerge in relations between businesses and people and replace the principle of company supremacy."

HIROSHI OKUMURA
is a Japanese economist.

Market globalization

BY MARIE-FRANCE BAUD



Phil Huling © Stock Illustration Source, Paris

The major economic phenomenon of recent years, globalization is benefitting the strong countries and bypassing the weak

The phenomenon known as the globalization of the economy, which tended to be overlooked during the high-growth years and the second half of the 1980s, is now a front-page issue. It is not, however, a recent development. In response to imperatives of size and competitiveness, firms from many countries have long been establishing themselves in areas of the world with strong economic growth. They go wherever they can improve productivity. Their growth strategy has been helped by financial globalization (the free circulation of capital and the lifting of exchange controls).

This determination to conquer new markets by setting up directly in the countries concerned has of course accelerated the break-up of the production system. Trade in manufactured goods has increased at the expense of primary agricultural, mining and energy products. As a proportion of overall trade, it went up from 50 per cent in 1970 to 70 per cent in the early 1990s, according to a European Community survey of May 1993.

Direct foreign investment has also increased sharply, though it is confined to the world's three most developed regions—North America, Europe, and Southeast Asia and Japan. Markets are tending to become integrated within rather than between regions. In 1993, for example, Japanese industry invested $65 billion in Southeast Asia (its main area of investment), more than the figure for the United States and Europe combined. Markets are increasingly open, however. In 1995, the United States was the main beneficiary of direct French foreign investment flows.

This rise in the volume of direct foreign investment has forced industrial groups in the developed countries to rely increasingly on international supplies. These groups are now restructuring their activities on a global scale, upsetting the competitive environment and the organization of skilled labour by repositioning and relocating operations in low-wage countries. A ▸

MARIE-FRANCE BAUD
is a French economic journalist.

Of the $23 trillion of global gross domestic product (GDP) in 1993, $18 trillion was in the industrialized countries, and only $5 trillion in the developing countries, even though they have nearly 80 per cent of the world's population.

In the past 30 years the poorest 20 per cent of the world's people saw their share of global income decline from 2.3 per cent to 1.4 per cent. Meanwhile, the share of the richest 20 per cent rose from 70 per cent to 85 per cent. In other words, the ratio of the shares of the richest and poorest doubled—from 30/1 to 61/1; the proportion of people enjoying per capita income growth of at least 5 per cent a year more than doubled (from 12 to 27 per cent), while the proportion of those experiencing negative growth more than tripled (from 5 per cent to 18 per cent).

The assets of the world's 358 individual dollar billionaires exceed the combined annual incomes of countries with 45 per cent of the world's people.

Source: *Human Development Report 1996, UNDP.*

- growing amount of international trade in intermediate goods is apparently between companies belonging to the same multinational groups. Trade within the same group is believed to amount to 25 per cent of world trade.

Globalization and pauperization

Economic globalization was on the agenda of the G7 summit of leading industrialized countries held in Lyons, France, in June 1996. While it is beneficial to world trade, it is also having negative repercussions on social cohesion and the equilibrium of the monetary and financial system. Evidence of this is to be found in the figure of 19 million unemployed in Europe, where growth is stagnating at below 1 per cent, and in the upheavals triggered by the Mexican crisis during the winter of 1994-1995.

According to the 1996 Human Development Report produced by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), average incomes fell in 70 countries during the 1980s. During the 1990-1993 period alone, average incomes fell by a fifth or more in 21 countries, mainly in Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

Globalization benefits the strong countries and puts the weakest at a disadvantage: "The poorest countries, where 20 per cent of the world's population lives, have seen their share of world trade fall between 1960 and 1990 from 4 per cent to less than 1 per cent," notes the UNDP report. "Although private investment flows to developing countries increased between 1970 and 1994 from $5 billion to $173 billion, three-quarters of this went to just ten countries, mostly in East and Southeast Asia and Latin America."

Yet in 1995 the World Bank forecast that the expansion of international trade and financial markets would encourage sustainable economic growth, and that this growth would contribute to a considerable improvement in living conditions in developing countries, which, according to these projections, are expected to account for 38 per cent of world production by 2010, as compared with 22 per cent in the 1980s. The developing countries would in that case account for half of world consumption and capital formation in terms of the quantity of goods and services that can be bought.

Relocation and unemployment

Many developed countries have realized that it is in their interest to internationalize the manufacturing process. As a result they are relocating their industrial production so as to take advantage of low wage costs and to move closer to the sources of raw materials and primary products.

Does this mean that relocation is responsible for the unemployment that has hit the majority of developed countries? Some authorities, including Charles Oman, who heads a working group on these problems at the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), believe that underemployment is more likely to be due to the difficulty inherent in moving from a heavyweight process of industrial production

Feverish activity on the Mexico City stock exchange on 5 January 1995, when Mexico was mired in financial crisis.

Dan Groshong © Sygma, Paris

to more flexible and productive methods enhanced by new technologies—in other words, in leaving the era of mechanization and entering the era of automatization.

Some economists argue that what is really at stake in the relocation process is not so much the ability to withstand competition from low-wage countries as the ability to capture market share in sophisticated products and leading-edge technologies. According to that argument, the real problems have been masked by lumping together the axing of jobs and the redeployment of production.

The Washington accords

Under a system of fixed exchange rates, exchange mechanisms play only a secondary role. The development of international relations and the general liberalization of capital movements have ushered in a new mechanism in exchange rate formation. Since the Washington accords of December 1971, which caused the collapse of the international monetary system established at Bretton Woods in 1944 (under which each currency had a fixed parity expressed in gold), most states have stopped setting the official value of their currency. The observed or anticipated evolution of rates is far more influential than the value of the currency.

One last unwelcome effect that financial globalization and deregulation have had is to introduce a considerable element of fragility into the world economy. Macroeconomic trends seem to be influenced more by the opinion of the market than by political decisions for which governments are accountable to their voters. Worse, financial reactions can degenerate into cumulative trends, whether downward or upward, and as a result send prices spiralling into regions that bear no relation to basic economic facts, since markets are incapable of self-regulation. Every twenty-four hours, more than a trillion dollars move around the world seeking the highest yield. This flow of capital "has opened the world to the operation of a global financial market that leaves even the strongest countries with limited autonomy over interest rates, exchange rates or other financial policies," UNDP reports.

This rampant globalization is generating inharmonious economic development which is causing mounting pauperization instead of creating jobs. Each year the ranks of the world's poor swell by 25 million. Differences in economic performance have grown so huge that two distinct worlds have come into being, with the gulf between rich and poor growing continually.

At the close of this year's G7 summit, the seven leading industrialized countries called for a new world partnership for development that would include developing countries, developed countries and multilateral institutions, so that the poorer countries can profit from globalization. Were the political decision-makers just concerned to make the right noises, or have they at last realized the necessity of such a step? ■

Rhodri Jones © Panos Pictures, London

A window display of Western goods in a shop in Kunming, capital of Yunnan Province in southern China.

THE RISE OF THE STOCK MARKET

Paolo Koch © Rapho, Paris

The New York Stock Exchange.

BY EMMANUEL VAILLANT

Stock exchanges, also known as bourses, came into being in Europe in the middle of the sixteenth century when, in conjunction with markets and trade fairs, places were created for transactions involving letters of credit and shares in trading companies. The term "bourse" is thought to have been first used in 1549 in Bruges (in present-day Belgium) and to be derived from the Van der Bürse family, whose town house was used by dealers trading in real-estate securities.

Until the late nineteenth century, Bruges, Antwerp, Lyons, Amsterdam, Paris and London were successively the leading financial markets. Their role at the heart of the capitalist system was to provide a meeting place between savers (private individuals and banks) and investors (states and businesses).

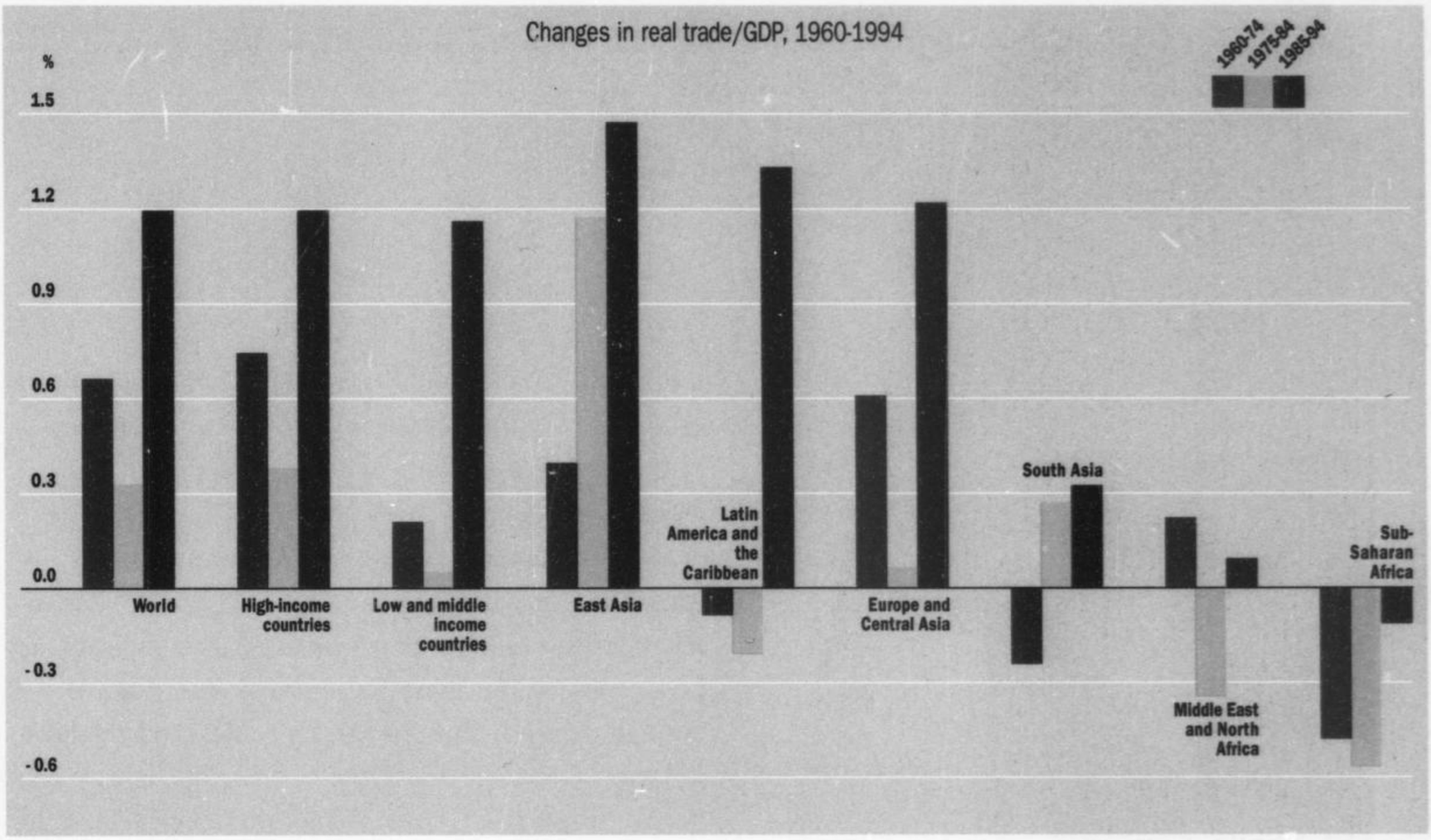
There are two main kinds of securities, shares and bonds. Shares represent a portion of a company's capital and offer a return (dividends) that varies in accordance with the company's profits. Bonds, on the other hand, are securities issued for a certain period of time, guaranteeing fixed interest earnings for their holders. Prices go up or down in accordance with supply and demand and are subject to speculation.

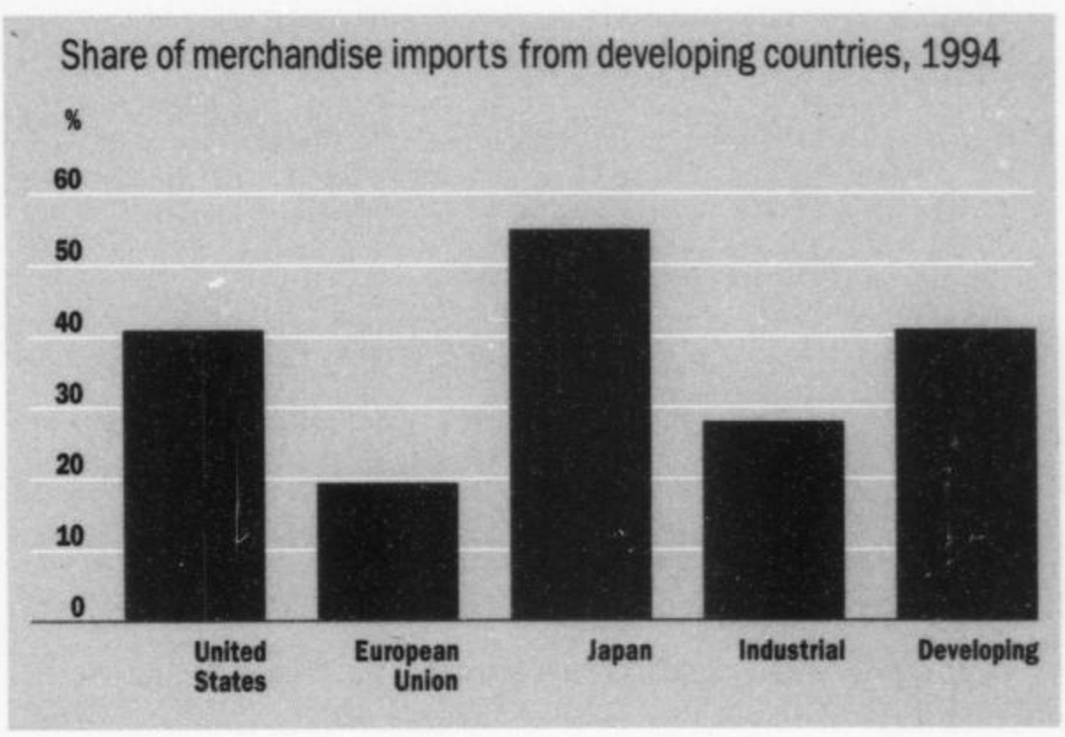
In the twentieth century the world's stock exchanges have made an important contribution to the financing of national economies. New York's Wall Street (U.S.A.) is the leading financial market today, in competition with the stock exchanges of Asia (especially Tokyo, Hong Kong and Singapore) and Europe (Frankfurt, London and Paris). On these increasingly globalized financial markets, which are developing more and more complex products, the trade in securities is influenced by economic, monetary, political and psychological factors.

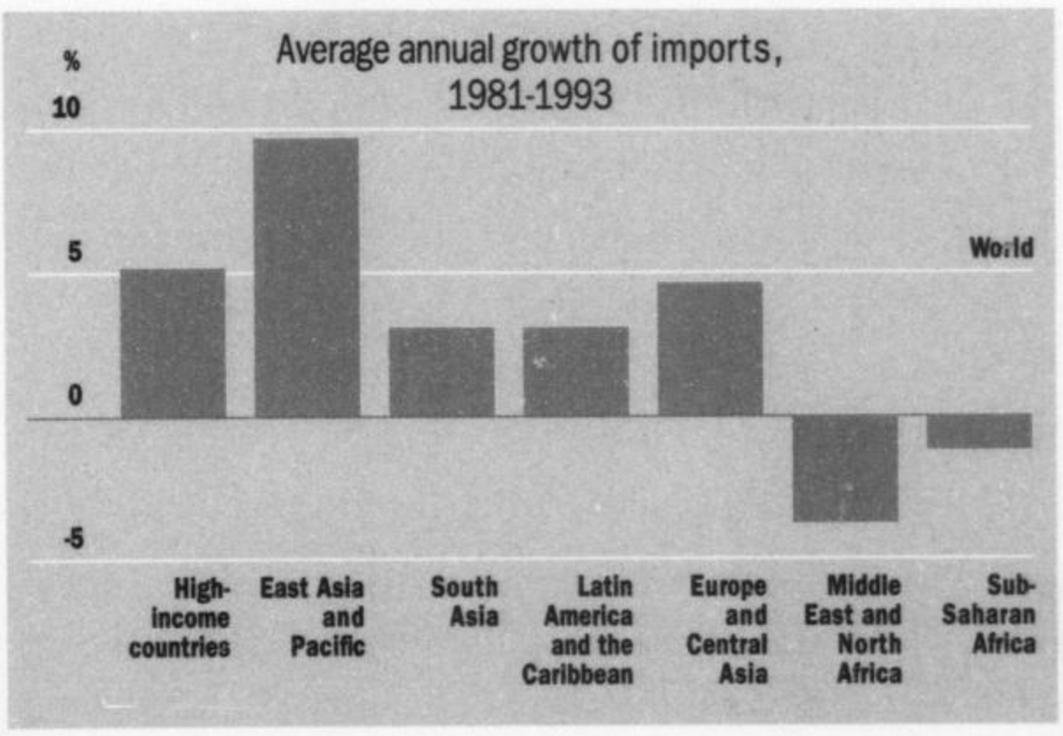
These markets are sometimes criticized as functioning like a "financial bubble", generating purely speculative profits which are unrelated to the development of the so-called "real" economy, i.e. industry, trade and services. ■

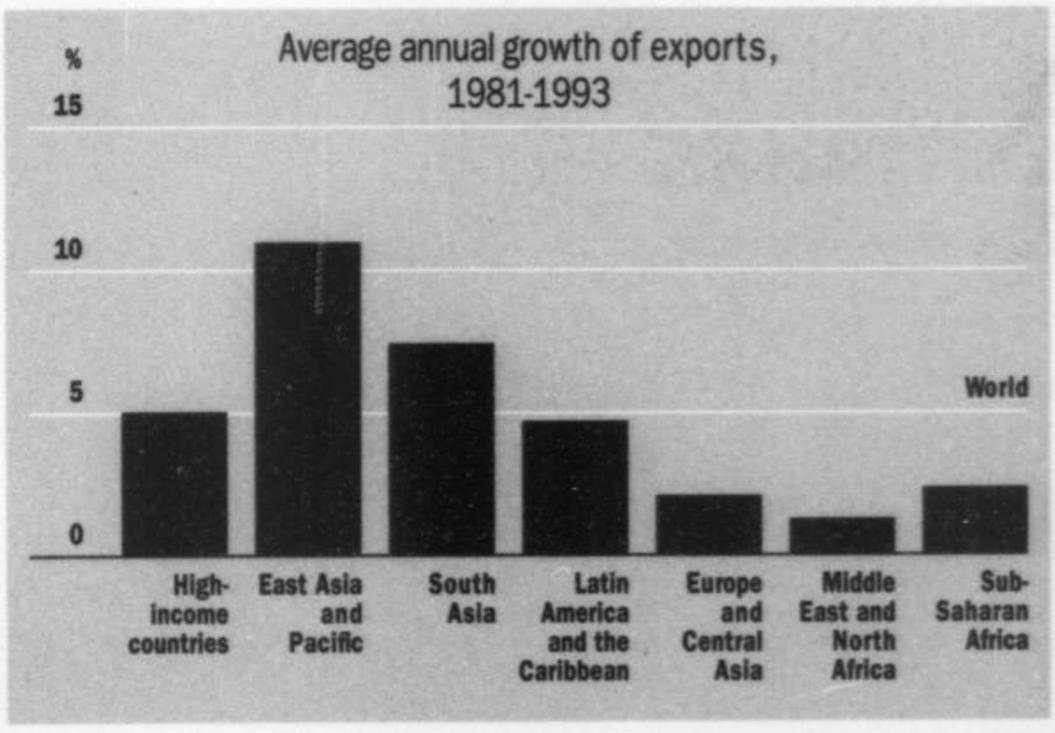
EMMANUEL VAILLANT
is a French journalist.

FACT FILE









Source:: Global Economic Prospects and the Developing Countries, World Bank 1996

Commentary

Poetry, an education in freedom

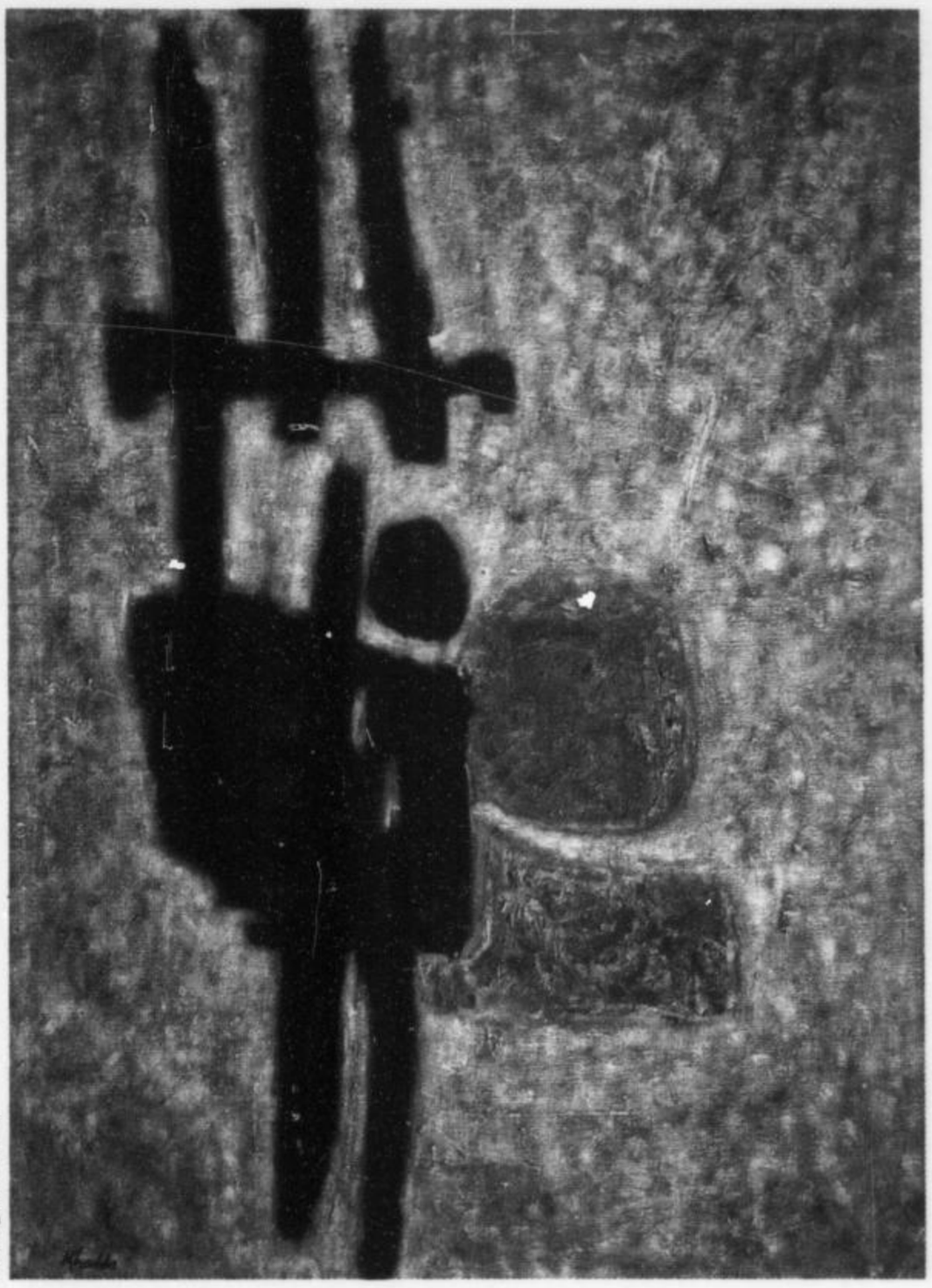
Federico Mayor

UNESCO/Gil Jacques, Montréal

It is impossible to be indifferent to the situation of opera in the world today. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, this art form which blends in a sublime alchemy the human voice, instrumental music and visual effects enchanted the courts and theatres of England, Germany, Spain and France. The great operatic works of the last four centuries were moments of perfection in the story of musical creation. Down through the ages, Monteverdi, Lully, Scarlatti, Handel, Rameau, Gluck, Mozart, Beethoven, Wagner, Verdi, Berlioz, Bizet and Glinka absorbed the heritage of the past and went on to break new ground. Whatever the dramatic subject matter, whatever the form, they brought creative magic to it.

Cassandras predicted that opera would die in the twentieth century, and it is true that for more than half a century cinema and television have replaced opera as a leading source of popular entertainment. Opera is prohibitively expensive to produce and is dependent on public or private sponsorship, yet it remains the dream-medium for most contemporary composers and still has a public following. I observed this recently in the arena of Verona in Italy with a production of Bizet's *Carmen*, directed by the master Franco Zeffirelli and conducted by Daniel Oren.

It is impossible, too, not to think of the great voices that over the past forty years have brought new authenticity and grandeur to opera. Audiences marvel at the purity of their timbre, their elegance of phrasing and their perfect sense of style. I think especially of Monserrat Caballé, Placido Domingo, Barbara Hendricks and José Carreras, who have done me the honour of joining UNESCO's group of Goodwill Ambassadors. They defend the ideals of UNESCO, especially in the context of exchanges between cultures, in training young people and encouraging their involve-



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My totem is peace **(1971), a painting by Algerian artist Mohammed Khadda (1930-1991).**

ment in creative activities. They also support a project to which I am particularly attached and which I discussed at length with the Verona authorities: the creation of an international institute for opera and poetry.

The future Institute will be a place to meet and exchange ideas, to discuss current developments in opera, its future, its response to new technology, and the training of young people. Leading experts will be able to contribute a spirit of scientific rigour and a mass of specialized data and knowledge. It hardly needs to be said that special attention will be paid to the traditions of non-European opera, whether from Beijing, Java or Bali.

The Institute's other component will be devoted to the world of poetry. Whatever official functions I occupy in my working life, in the silence of the evening and morning I always return to poetry. I can only live and I wish only to live in the space and freedom of poetry. Poetry is an education in freedom. Despite the barriers and the inequalities that continue to exist in the world (and I see them at first hand when traveling for UNESCO), it is writers, poets, novelists and thinkers who do most to change ways of thinking, banish taboos and undermine prejudices. Fanned to a white heat, words have the power to melt chains. Sometimes the word is all powerful.

All my thoughts are linked to a culture of peace, which I think brings me close to the original flame of UNESCO, to the soul of this intellectual and moral arm of the United Nations system. It is my belief that poetry brings its pure grist to the mill of an ethical system that must be rethought. Is it futile to dream of a different kind of society, one capable of engendering a new humanity and perpetuating harmonious human relationships? Is it mad to want to put an end to a lethally destructive practice (war) and reinvent another practice (peace) that takes experience into account? The poetry I love is not an empty game. It is an inner link between poetics, ethics and politics.

History—the history of humanity and the history of language—is an unending process. The poet must be a catalyst in the renewal of active thinking and the values that are an honour to our species and urge us constantly to exceed our own self-expectations. Poetry is a bulwark against the onslaught of barbarity in its many guises: ideological and technological aberrations, violence, nationalism, religious and political fanaticism, racism, intolerance and selfishness. Why appeal to poetry, timeless, immaterial and weaponless that it is? The answer is that in poetry the word is brought to an incandescent heat and speaks to each and every one of us. It pulverizes injustice and hatred; it is akin to love. Yes, poetry is an Ark of the Covenant, *our* Ark of the Covenant. For all of us, poet and reader alike, poetry can make sense of the world, with all its obscure mysteries, great contradictions and sublime achievements. ■

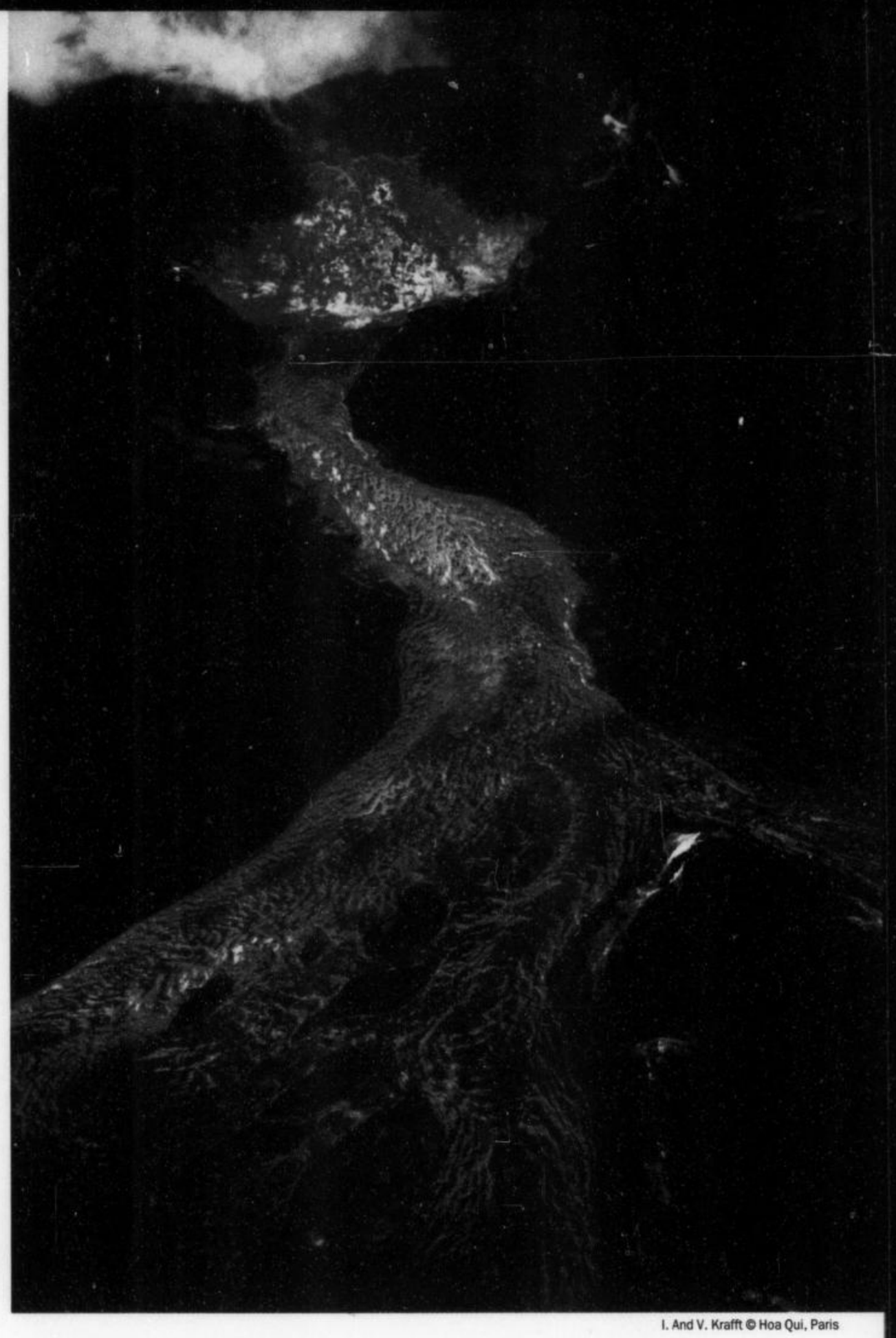
"The dream within me
I shall keep
as long as I breathe.
This dream
is my life,
a dream of love
alive at last
in each one of us[1]."

1 Federico Mayor, *Patterns*, translated by Rosemary Wiltshire, Forest Books, London, 1994.

Greenwatch

Hawaii Volcanoes National Park

by France Bequette



I. And V. Krafft © Hoa Qui, Paris

A river of lava oozes from Kilauea, an active volcano on the island of Hawaii.

Once upon a time Pele the fire goddess, daughter of Moe-moea-au-lii the troublemaker and Haumea the Earth-mother, was travelling in search of a place to settle. She tried each of the Hawaiian Islands, one after the other, but whenever she sank her magic spade into the earth to dig a fire pit, she was too close to the sea and the waves came and extinguished the flames. Then, at long last, she found her dream home on Kilauea volcano in the southeast corner of the Island of Hawaii, sometimes called the Big Island.

Native Hawaiians are attached to their traditions, and still offer their goddess meat, fish, fruit and flowers, which they lay on the edge of Halemaumau crater, a sacred place in their island chain. This sanctuary is located inside Hawaii Volcanoes National Park, which was created by a decree of the U.S. Congress in 1961 and in 1980 became a UNESCO biosphere reserve[1]. The Park's status does not prevent the local people from practising their traditions there. Native Hawaiians who regularly go there do not have to pay the $5 entrance fee, they can pick the medicinal plants they need, and the women are allowed to purify themselves in the hot springs.

The Hawaiian Goose or nene (*Branta sandvicensis*).

Stephen Krasemann © Jacana, Paris

The Garden of Eden

About two million people visit the Park each year. There are excellent facilities for welcoming them. Exhibitions and film projections are held at a large Visitor Centre which also contains a mass of documentary material and proposes theme-related guided tours. A network of asphalted roads enables tourists to skirt the edge of Kilauea or travel down to the sea. The diversity of landscapes is amazing, and trails for walkers fan out in all directions. As the sun beats down, you pass by smoking, silver-grey craters, orange banks of sulphur, and mineral deserts and luxuriant forests where towering ferns mingle with the dark foliage of the trees. Visitors can climb 4,170-metre-high Mauna Loa (the "Great Mountain") that has been built up by a succession of lava flows and whose perfectly rounded summit is sometimes covered in snow.

This remote Pacific archipelago of 124 islands, islets and atolls, including eight main islands, emerged from the ocean 70 million years ago but it was not until 1,600 years ago that its first human inhabitants—Polynesians from the Marquesas Islands—arrived. The new settlers found plants and insects that had been carried to the islands by the wind, birds or sea, but no predatory land mammals. This was a decisive

factor, for in the absence of predators, neither plants nor animals developed unnecessary systems of defence.

Before mosquitoes came to the islands as clandestine passengers on the first sailing ships, the small bird called the red apapane (*Himatione sanguinea*) had developed no immunity to malaria. Avian malaria now takes its toll. Mint and sage had no need of strong, protective odours before the introduction of goats. Park officials are doing their best to save the the state bird, the nene or Hawaiian goose (*Branta sandvicensis*), from extinction. American zoologist Stuart Pimm calculates that at least 101 bird species have disappeared from Hawaii since humans settled there.

© France Bequette, Paris

A volcanic sulphur bank.

Internal enemies

Hawaii's isolation explains why the islands are home to an extraordinarily large number of endemic plants: 95 per cent of some 1,000 recorded species are found nowhere else in the world, but they are vulnerable to feral pigs (*Sus scrofa*) and other browsing animals. According to botanist Charles Lamoureux, director of Honolulu's Lyon Arboretum, about half the plants should be considered endangered, even if they do not yet figure on official lists.

There are also 5,000 species brought from outside, 25 of which are especially destructive. The worst offenders are the firetree (*Myrica faya*) from the Canary Islands, the strawberry guava (*Psidium cattleianum*) a tree from Brazil, the banana poka vine (*Passiflora molissima*) from South America, and "Coster's curse" (*Clidemia hirta*) a shrub from Central America. They all proliferate, smothering native plants. But war has been declared on them. In one case, an insect has been imported from the Canary Islands in order to combat its compatriot plant, the firetree, but results are slow in coming. A botanist with the National Park, Linda Pratt, tried various herbicides, but it is an uphill job because of the risk of destroying innocuous plants and polluting the water. Widespread "Wanted Dead or Alive" posters display the name and photo of the miconia, a prolific tree that must be destroyed before it overruns the island, as it is threatening to do in Tahiti (French Polynesia) where it has already invaded three-quarters of the wooded area.

Protecting the park also means eliminating certain species of land mammals that were introduced by humans. To do so, Park Superintendent Jim Martin has taken the unusual step of enrolling the help of poachers. Some may feel sad about getting rid of feral cats, but they plunder the eggs and young of a threatened species, the dark-rumped petrel (*Pterodroma phaeopygia sandvicensis*). Feral goats were virtually eradicated with the help of local hunters. Their number has fallen from 15,000 in 1980 to less than 100. Although 11,000 feral pigs were killed between 1930 and 1970, it is estimated that around 4,000 still survive.

In addition to hunting, building fences is a good, albeit costly solution. Jim Martin says that money is lacking. There are only eight rangers, whereas from fifteen to twenty are needed for proper surveillance. The Park can no longer afford to pay researchers. Those who come to study there belong to outside organizations. In protest, the Park closed down in November 1995 but had to re-open after three weeks when the public, which had initially been supportive, lost patience.

The situation is particularly worrisome because the Park is in a dangerous area. Coastal cliffs crumble, and lava can erupt at any moment, since Mauna Loa and Kilauea are two of the world's most active volcanoes. Cuttings had to be made in some of the most recent lava flows in order to re-open some of the roads.

Uses and abuses

Although Volcanoes Park is a well-defined central area of the Big Island, maps do not yet show either the buffer or the intermediate zones required by a biosphere reserve. Jim Martin explains that there is an understanding with the federal prison and the private lands that border the park and that a development plan is being worked out. New buildings in a nearby village will blend with the forest and cause no damage.

A more serious problem arises from the fact that Hawaii has been in a catastrophic economic situation since the collapse of world sugar prices. Sugar cane fields have been abandoned, and jobless labourers are growing marijuana even inside the park boundaries. By clearing forest land for their crops and protecting ▶

Tree ferns on the island of Hawaii.

© France Bequette, Paris

FRANCE BEQUETTE
is a Franco-American journalist.

▶ them with lethal traps, they are endangering the ecosystem. Heavy fines and long prison sentences, however, have helped to improve the situation.

But this is not all. Tree ferns are being cut down with chainsaws and hauled away in truck loads and, despite the presence of surveillance cameras, vandals are stealing archaeological treasures. The Park was included on UNESCO's World Heritage List in 1987 and contains once-inhabited caves, vestiges of villages and fragile petroglyphs, some of which have recently been covered over by a lava flow.

The Hawaiian Volcano Observatory, founded in 1912 and located within the park on the edge of the Kilauea caldera, plays a major role in running the park. Ground deformation, gas emissions, changes in the electrical, magnetic and gravitational fields and lava movements are closely monitored in an attempt to anticipate dangerous seismic activity. Lava is at present flowing abundantly in a part of the Park that has been closed to the public. At night fiery rivers flow through the countryside and down mountainsides to the sea, sending huge billows of red-tinted steam into the air. ■

I. And V. Krafft © Hoa Qui, Paris

Liquid lava fountains and flows on Hawaii's Mauna Loa volcano.

1 There are currently 337 of these. *Editor*

world ..

THE MIGHTY SHRIMP

Land-owners, road builders and developers in the state of California (U.S.A.) are up in arms at the federal government, which has effectively put millions of hectares of land off-limits to development by refusing to take the fairy-shrimp, a small crustacean, off the endangered species list. In 1978 a biologist estimated that 90 per cent of the shrimp's habitat had been lost, a claim denied by other experts, who assert that the tiny creature is actually flourishing. In 1995 a thousand Californians joined in a demonstration to demand the removal of the tiny freshwater shrimp from the list of threatened species. According to California's Governor what is endangered is not the fairy shrimp but the state's economic development. ■

initiatives

Carrots and DDT

Visalia is a small farming community in California (USA) about half way between San Francisco and Los Angeles. Near its tiny airport is a field surrounded by a tall fence with unusual signs attached to it at regular intervals. The signs show a carrot and two sentences in the Miao language.

Back in 1947 a crop-dusting company set up shop in a corner of the airport. From 1946 to 1972 DDT pesticide was the most widely used insect-killer in the world. Since 1973, however, it has been banned in the United States. Stored in drums on the ground, the DDT was transferred to the tanks of the crop-dusting bi-planes, which were then rinsed out after each sortie. The empty drums were stacked up in a basin.

© France Bequette, Paris

In 1984 the American Department of Health inspected the land. The crop-dusting company had long since disappeared, but not the DDT residue that was discovered in the soil. Fortunately it was neither very soluble nor volatile and had contaminated only a topsoil layer 15 centimetres deep, or about 8,300 m^3 of land. It had to be cleaned up. But none of the standard solutions seemed very suitable: stripping the soil and treating it thermically would have cost $2 million. Dumping it in an uninhabited area would have required constant supervision.

Then, engineer Dennis Keller came up with the idea of planting carrots. It is true that each crop costs $170,000 (still less expensive than heat treatment), but the carrots suck up 50 per cent of the DDT remaining in the soil. Carrots, especially the large French variety called Scarlet of Nantes are the only vegetable able to concentrate this kind of pesticide in its tissue, not just its skin, as was generally believed, but in its core and roots too. The carrots are then dried out and burned. Dennis Keller says that the carrot idea is also being used to clean up DDT in Australia.

As for the fenced-in area and its strange signs, put up in 1992, they are there to prevent the Miaos, refugees from the Vietnamese war, from poaching the carrots. The land must wait a certain amount of time before being handed over to promoters. The admissible DDT level of 1.4 mg. per kg of earth has not yet been attained. ■

INSECT OPERA ON CD

320 million years ago, insect sounds were already to be heard rising from the ferns of the carboniferous period. Although many people today are familiar with the singing of crickets, cicadas and grasshoppers, other insects, like the termite, the ant or the weevil, produce love calls, threats and courtship or acceptance noises that are inaudible to the human ear because they are too weak and/or too high (ultrasounds) or low (infrasounds). Now, thanks to highly sophisticated recording techniques, the sounds of 50 insect species found in France have been recorded and made audible on a compact disk. Presented as an opera, the disk is accompanied by a 200-page explanatory "libretto" and colour photos. The authors, André-Jacques Andrieu and Bernard Dumortier, are members of the French National Institute of Agronomic Research (INRA). ■

***Entomophonia*,**
André-Jacques Andrieu and Bernard Dumortier, INRA, 1994.

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YOUNG REPORTERS FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

In 1994 the Foundation for Environmental Education in Europe (FEEE), a non-governmental organization, launched "Young Reporters for the Environment", an interdisciplinary project for selected groups of high school students, who are given basic training in journalism and travel the world to report on environmental issues. Their 1996 missions have focused on solar energy, hydroelectricity, the dynamics of atmospheric fluxes in the Mediterranean Sea and the polar environment. On missions to Viet Nam, Quebec (Canada), France and Spitsbergen (the Svalbard Islands), young reporters communicated via the Internet with their "colleagues" back home in school. A selection of their best articles, printed under the title "Magazine", is available upon request from FEEE national offices. The Foundation also publishes a newsletter (in English and French) which is a mine of information for anyone interested in environmental education and who might like to join a network.

<u>United Kingdom</u>: Mr. Graham Hashworth, Tidy Britain Group, The Pier, Wigan, WN3 4EX.
Tel: (44) 1942.72.46.20;
Fax: (44) 1942.82.47.78.

<u>Ireland</u>: Ms. Patricia Oliver or Ms. Jo Cooke, An Taisce, The Tailors' Hall, Back Lane, Dublin 8.
Tel: (353) 1 454.17.86;
Fax: (353) 1 453.32.55.

DOUBTS ABOUT POLYSTYRENE

Polystyrene, a blown plastic product made from petroleum and found washed up on almost every beach in the world, is taking up more and more space in household waste. It is used as insulation in buildings, and especially for making cups and food packaging costing two or three times less than paper. But while it is much cheaper to manufacture than paper (requiring 36 times less electricity and half as much water for cooling), it is more difficult and expensive to recycle than paper. Recycled polystyrene costs 25% more to produce than new polystyrene. ■

GOOD NEWS FOR LAKE BAIKAL

Biologically rich Lake Baikal contains 2,600 animal and plant species, 1,500 of which, like the freshwater seal, are endemic. It is the oldest, the deepest and, in the opinion of many, the most beautiful freshwater lake in the world. But for the past 30 years it has been polluted by waste ejected into it by a cellulose factory on its southern shore, the only factory to evacuate its waste directly into the lake. Although the city of Irkutsk is ready to pay part of the costs of shutting down the factory, the problem of finding jobs for its 3,000 employees has not yet been solved. ■

THE WORLD BANK GOES GREEN

With $10 billion in its environmental portfolio for 137 projects in 62 countries, the World Bank is now the world's leading financier of environmental projects in the developing world. According to its 1995 environment annual report, *Mainstreaming the Environment*, the Bank is determined to "address the social dimensions of environmental management, ensuring that stakeholders are involved in the design and implementation of projects". For Ismail Serageldin, Vice-President for environmentally sustainable development, it is a question of "greening the entire portfolio of the Bank". ■

CLEANSING SEED

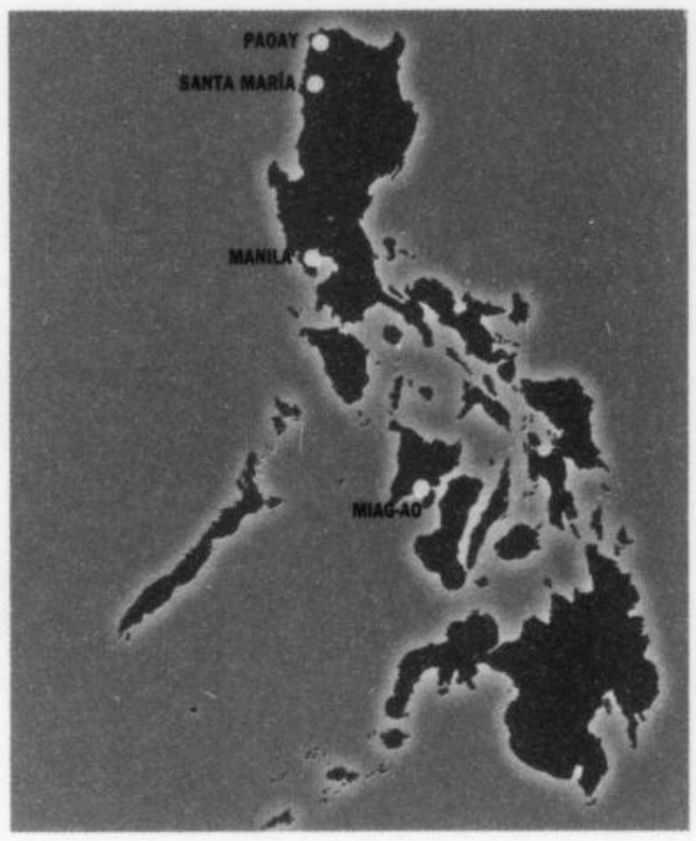
British researcher Geoff Folkard has recently confirmed scientifically that the seeds of the *Moringa oleifera* tree have a purifying effect, something which has long been known in certain African countries. When pressed, the seeds liberate proteins that draw bacteria, viruses and other water-borne micro-organisms to them like magnets. The pollutants bunch up and can then be got rid of simply by filtering the water. *Moringa oleifera's* virtues do not stop there. Not only can the tree grow in poor soil, its leaves and flowers are filled with vitamins and other nutritious substances. Its seeds also provide oil for lamps and soap. ■

Jacques Pavlovsky © Sygma, Paris

Michel Viard © Jacana, Paris

HERITAGE

Baroque churches of the Philippines



by Augusto Fabella Villalón

An original form of religious architecture arose when European baroque came to the Philippines

Five hundred years ago, when Spain was at the height of her power, the Philippines were the Spanish empire's easternmost fringe. The journey from Madrid to the faraway colony took many months. A trans-Atlantic crossing to South America was followed by an overland journey to Acapulco in Mexico, and then a voyage across the Pacific from Acapulco to Manila, the Philippine capital.

From the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries, many Spanish friars embarked on this hazardous journey in order to spread the word of God in their country's Asian outpost. When they arrived in the Philippines, they discovered an agricultural and seafaring society. People lived in huts built of bamboo, rattan and palm clustered along the seashore or on river banks. The huts were raised above the ground on stilts to prevent damage from seasonal flood waters and looked like large baskets cradled on poles.

Although they responded perfectly to the tropical island environment, these traditional dwellings were not intended to last forever. They burned quickly and were easily blown away by the typhoons that came yearly. Constructed out of light, tensile materials, they swayed during gentle earth tremors but collapsed with the onset of the powerful earthquakes that periodically ravaged the country. However, fashioned as they were out of natural materials that grew abundantly near the villages, they could soon be rebuilt.

The Spanish friars, used to large, lofty, strong stone churches built to last for a thousand years, did not regard these impermanent structures as proper dwellings for God. They introduced the Western concept of permanence in architecture to the Philippines, and also the use of stone for building.

The friars directed teams of skilled Filipino and Chinese craftsmen who were unaware of Western construction techniques and the formalistic sensibilities of ecclesiastical art. The construction of a church was a community effort, and most churches in the Philippines cannot be ascribed to a single designer or architect. They are the product of collaborative work by many unknown artisans.

The friars were guided by their vague recollections of churches they had seen before leaving their native Spain, and built structures in a visually delightful, highly personalized Philippine style adapted from Spanish baroque. As more and more churches were built, this form of "peripheral baroque" developed and

C. And E. Valentin © Hoa Qui, Paris

Flanked with massive anti-earthquake buttresses, St. Augustine's church at Paoay (Ilocos Norte province) is a remarkable example of what has been called "seismic baroque".

J. L. Alvarez © Incafo, Madrid

captured the imagination of the Filipinos. A highly individualistic variant of Spanish colonial architecture, it became an enduring, but today severely endangered, testimony to the interaction that successfully integrated two diverse cultures, uniting the visual sensibilities of West and East.

In 1993, the following four architecturally outstanding Spanish Colonial churches of the Philippines were included on the World Heritage List.

The church of St. Augustine (Paoay, Ilocos Norte province)

Built in 1710 by the Augustinians, this ensemble of church and detached bell tower standing on the edge of a broad plaza is majestic in scale. Its triangular, pedimented façade of soft stone, plain at the bottom, is decorated with light, elegant carving near the top of the pediment, which is edged with a row of stone finials (pinnacle ornaments) like feathers delicately brushing the sky. Thick perpendicular stone buttresses protrude from the church wall to protect the main structure from earthquakes. The buttresses are designed as huge double volutes (swirl forms), and their interplay of curves and counter-curves gives an impression of magical lightness.

Reinforcing the Oriental flavour, the bell tower situated a short distance away from the principal church structure tapers slightly upwards in layers reminiscent of a pagoda. Its side entrances are flanked by floral motifs carved with a fluidity accentuated by clouds floating above them. The ethereal grace of the façade softens the heavy architectural elements, and the visual reference linking the architecture to the great Indonesian shrine of Borobudur brings an Oriental aspect to the Catholic rituals performed inside the church.

The church of Our Lady of the Assumption (Santa María, Ilocos Sur province)

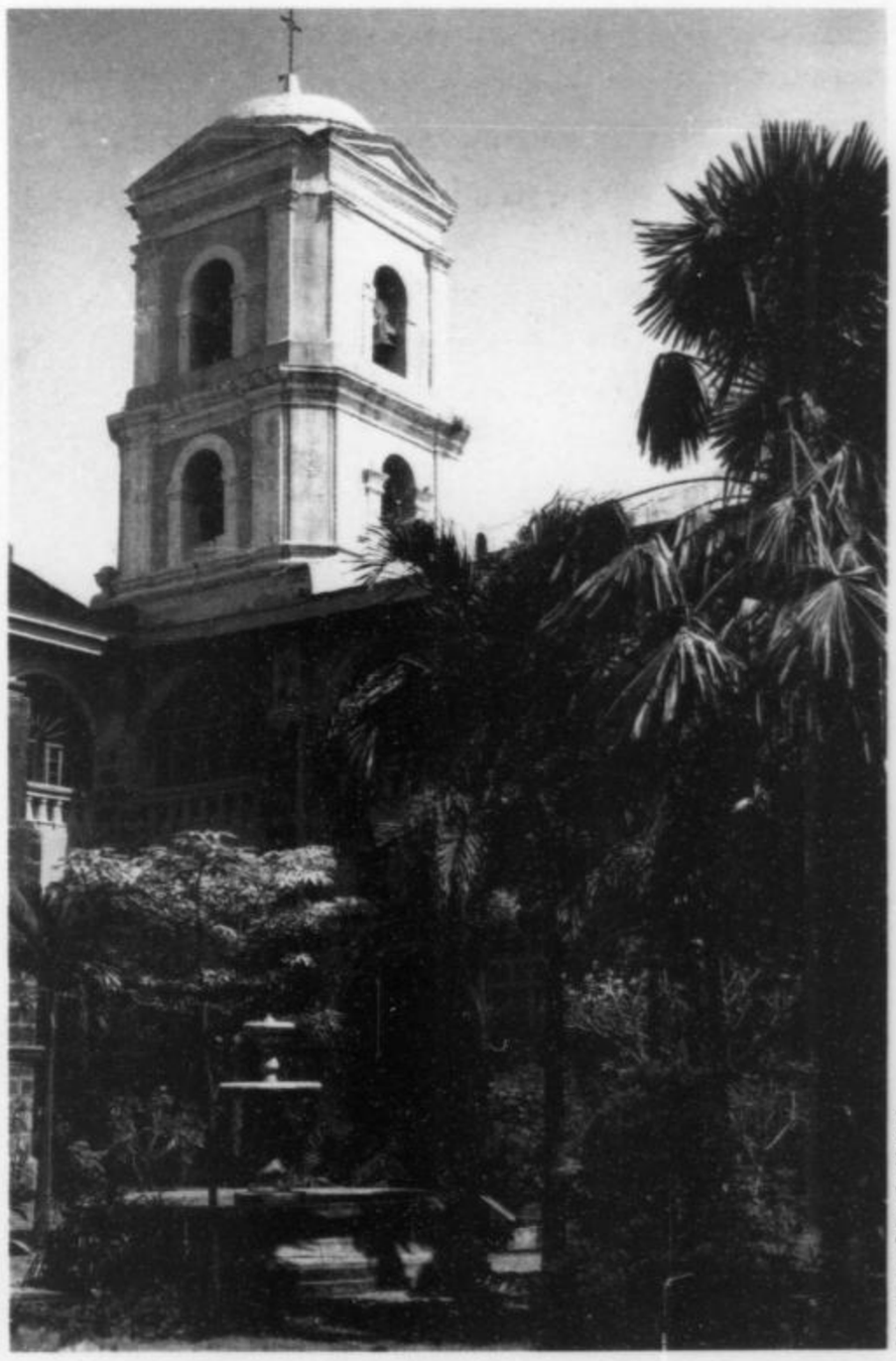
This ensemble of church and parish residence built by the Augustinians overlooks the town of Santa María from a platform atop a flight of eighty-five steps made of wide granite blocks imported from China. Instead of its façade, it presents its austere, almost windowless sides to the town below. The residence, connected by an arcaded bridge to the church structure, faces the church and completes the architectural ensemble. As with the church of St. Augustine at Paoay, buttresses swirl upwards to reinforce the side walls against earthquake damage. The detached pagoda-like bell tower stands a short distance from the main façade to prevent it from falling on the main structure if is toppled by an earthquake. The charm of the Santa María ensemble lies in its hilltop setting. The church buildings implanted solidly above the town resemble a fortified medieval citadel.

The church of St. Augustine (Intramuros, Manila)

Built in 1587 under the direction of Augustinians, this is the oldest existing stone church in the Philippines and one of few examples of ecclesiastical architecture in the Intramuros, the fortified settlement built by the Spaniards along the shores of Manila Bay. Built as the Mother House of the Augustinian Order in the Philippines and in Asia, the Renaissance style complex includes the main church, monasteries, cloisters and botanical gardens. The ensemble is contained within an entire city block. The austere façade of the church faces a small plaza guarded by a pair of Chinese stone dogs. Instead of extending outwards from the walls, the thick buttresses built to protect the church against earthquake damage are incorporated inside the building in a series of sumptuously decorated side chapels lining both sides of the church. The only ▶

The church of Our Lady of the Assumption at Santa Maria (Ilocos Sur province) and its detached bell-tower.

St. Augustine's church in the old walled district of Manila.



J. L. Alvarez © Incafo, Madrid

J. L. Alvarez © Incafo, Madrid

St. Augustine's church in the old walled district of Manila is the most famous religious monument in the Philippine capital. It contains a notable collection of sacred art.

▶ Philippine church to have withstood typhoons and earthquakes, a revolution, the ravages of a world war and an occupation, the church houses one of the country's leading collections of ecclesiastical art and rare books.

Church of St. Thomas of Villanueva (Miag-ao, Iloilo province)

Completed in 1797, this church is one of the most lyrical, exuberant examples of Philippine culture's translation of Western baroque design principles into a hybrid local style. Constructed on a rise overlooking the sea, the church originally served as a fortress to protect the villagers from pirate raids. Its basic architectural composition follows the Philippine archetype of a simply roofed, solid and squat rectangular structure. A pedimented façade was grafted onto the front of the otherwise plain structure. A pair of squat, non-symmetrical bell towers, which also once acted as lookout towers to alert the villagers in times of danger, taper upwards from a square base. The two towers, although of unequal height, provide a strong upward thrust while visually anchoring each side of the façade. On the façade itself, heavily incised relief carving with a remarkable three-dimensional quality depicts St. Christopher dressed as a Filipino farmer carrying the Christ-child on his shoulders across a river framed by luxuriant tropical vegetation. The powerful composition of highly exaggerated, undulating architectural details in constant movement are Philippine exuberance at its best, a true visual pleasure.

These churches where Filipinos still continue to worship illustrate the success with which this culture has completely and effortlessly bridged East and West, forming a distinctively recognizable, multicultural but nevertheless totally Filipino identity. ■

AUGUSTO FABELLA VILLALÓN
is a Filipino sociologist, architect and art historian.

KEY DATES

1521
Ferdinand Magellan claims the Philippines for the Spanish crown but is killed in the island of Mactan. His crew returns to Spain by circumnavigating the world for the first time.

1571
Establishment of Manila. Construction of the fortifications of Intramuros.

1587-1606
Construction of the church of St. Augustine, Intramuros (Manila). **1854:** extensive façade renovations by Don Luciano Oliver, Municipal Architect of Manila. **1863:** one tower damaged by earthquake and never rebuilt.

1710
Completion of St. Augustine's church, Paoay (Ilocos Norte province).

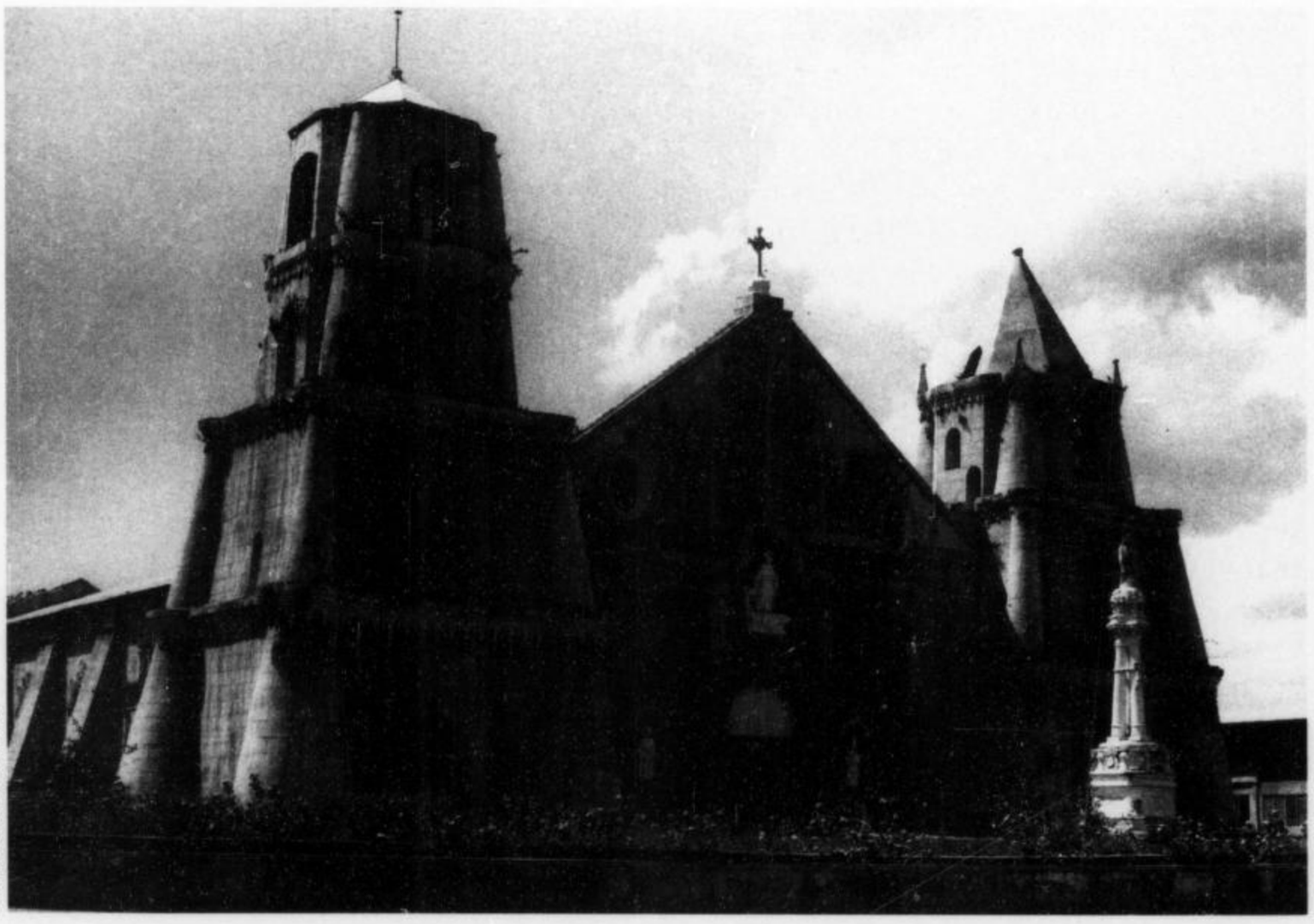
1765-1810
Construction of the existing church of Our Lady of the Assumption, Santa María (Ilocos Sur province).

1768-1797
Construction of St. Thomas of Villanueva, Miag-ao (Iloilo province).

1898
End of Spanish era.

1945
Granting of independence to the Philippines.

The imposing church of St. Thomas of Villanueva at Miag-ao (Iloilo Province).



J. L. Alvarez © Incafo, Madrid

A modern Catalan composer whose work deserves to be better known

The hidden voice of Federico Mompou

by Isabelle Leymarie

Federico Mompou i Dencausse (1893-1987) is an emblematic figure of Catalan music. He was not, as some have claimed, a somewhat precious miniaturist or a poor man's Debussy, but one of the most unusual and important Spanish composers of his time. His work consists largely of short pieces for piano and voice, but he also wrote for guitar, French horn, organ and chamber orchestra. Mompou's music, often melancholy in tone, and tinged with a poetry that is at once concise and visionary, reaches the deepest, most secret recesses of the listener's sensibility.

"The mystery of Mompou eludes us as soon as we try to label it or fit it into reflexive categories," wrote the French philosopher Vladimir Jankélévitch. "But we can perceive that secret and inimitable voice, which is the very voice of silence: we hear that voice with the ear of the soul when 'loneliness becomes music'."[1] In the four volumes of his restrained and unadorned musical testament, *Musica Callada* (Music that Falls Silent, 1959-67), which was inspired by the great Spanish mystic, St. John of the Cross, Mompou achieves maximum expression with a minimum of means. The music in it is silent, he said, because "it is heard internally. Its emotion is secret, and becomes sound only by reverberating in the coldness of our solitude."

Mompou, the contemporary of another great Catalan artist, Joan Miró, whose enthusiasm and freshness of inspiration were similar to his own, was born in Barcelona on 16 April 1893, to a mother of French descent and a Catalan father. He was fascinated during his childhood—the memory was to haunt him all his life—by the sound of the bells in his grandfather's foundry. He studied the piano at the *Conservatori del Liceu* in Barcelona and attended concerts by the greatest pianists of the time. He himself gave a recital at the age of fifteen which included works by Mozart, Schubert, Grieg and Mendelssohn.

His debut as a pianist suggested he was destined for a brilliant career. But Fauré's music, which he first heard in 1909, came as a revelation to him and made him decide to become a composer. In 1911, armed with a letter of introduction from the composer Enrique Granados (1867-1916), he settled in Paris and entered the Conservatoire, where he studied piano and harmony. He then devised his own harmonic system, which, with its unexpected chords, was Impressionistic in atmosphere but governed by a totally original logic. His motto became "recomençar", which means returning to the spirit of the "primitives" in musical composition. He rejected modulation, the bar line and counterpoint and was fond of "imponderable tones" (Vladimir Jankélévitch).

Between 1913 and 1921 Mompou wrote some of his most accomplished works for piano, including *Pessebres* (Cribs), *Escenes d'Infants* (Children's Scenes) and *Suburbis* (Suburbs), which sought to express "the sound of an atmosphere, the gossamer lightness of a feeling, the parenthesis of a quaint episode," in the words of the Catalan musicologist, Lluís Millet. While in Paris, then a hive of musical creativity, Mompou met the composers Maurice Ravel and Erik Satie, among others, and became friends with several of his compatriots, such as the sculptor Apelles Fenosa and the painters Miquel Renom and Celso Lagar.

When the First World War broke out in 1914, Mompou returned to Barcelona and took part in the Catalan renaissance movement, Noucentisme. In 1921 he returned to Paris, where his compositions soon won a reputation, and remained there, apart from the occasional visit to his home town, until the Nazi Occupation nineteen years later. By the end of the 1920s he had written the first cycle of his *Cançons i Danses* (Songs and Dances), the first two *Preludes*, other piano pieces and a number of songs. Although his friends included Francis Poulenc and Georges Auric, he refused to join the Group of Six[2], preferring to remain independent.

During the 1930s Mompou went through an unhappy patch in which he was less prolific. He returned to Barcelona in 1941 and joined the Independent Catalan Composers' movement, while keeping up his links with French musicians. He mixed with writers and publishers, and set to music the poetry of his Catalan friend, Josep Janés i Olivé. But above all he met the young pianist Carme Bravo, whom he married a few years later. He then decided to make a fresh start as a composer. and enjoyed an unparalleled spell of renewed creativity. The works he composed during this period included some new *Cançons i Danses*, a set of *Variations on a Theme by Chopin*, and *Cantar del Alma* (Song of the Soul) for choir and orchestra, which was also inspired by St. John of the Cross. In 1967 he completed the final volume of his *Musica Callada*, none of whose seven short pieces is given a faster tempo than *tempo moderato*. The pianist Alicia de Larrocha, the dedicatee of the work, gave its first performance in Cadaques in 1972.

Mompou was an isolated figure who rebelled against convention and always remained true to his own temperament and sensibility. Freed from the constraints of bar lines, tonality and established forms, he is as different from Wagner and Schoenberg as he is from his Spanish predecessors, Manuel de Falla, Albéniz and Granados (the last two were also born in Catalonia, but belonged to other movements), and from Debussy. He belonged to an age-old tradition of Mediterranean music. He sometimes quotes from his favourite Catalan tunes in *Cançons i Danses*, and from working-class songs in *Suburbis*, though he rejects nationalism and folklore. His Iberian high spirits, which contrast with his more incantatory and dreamlike leanings, are chiefly to be found in *Gitano*, the last of his *Impressions Intimes*, and in some of his *Fêtes Lointaines*. Mompou plumbed the mystical sources of the universe in *Cants Magics* and *Charmes*.

Mompou, who died on 30 June 1987, wrote his own epitaph:

"Death blesses the union
of the soul with silence.
Sleep and rest, my heart,
Eternity gives you a serenade and
you're lulled by
The greatest love of all." ■

ISABELLE LEYMARIE
is a Franco-American musicologist.

1. In *Albéniz, Sévérac, Mompou et la Présence Lointaine*, by Vladimir Jankélévitch, Seuil publishers, Paris, 1983.
2. A group of six young French composers formed in Paris in 1918. Its members were Darius Milhaud, Arthur Honegger, Georges Auric, Francis Poulenc, Louis Durey and Germaine Tailleferre. They adopted Erik Satie as their spiritual mentor. *Ed.*

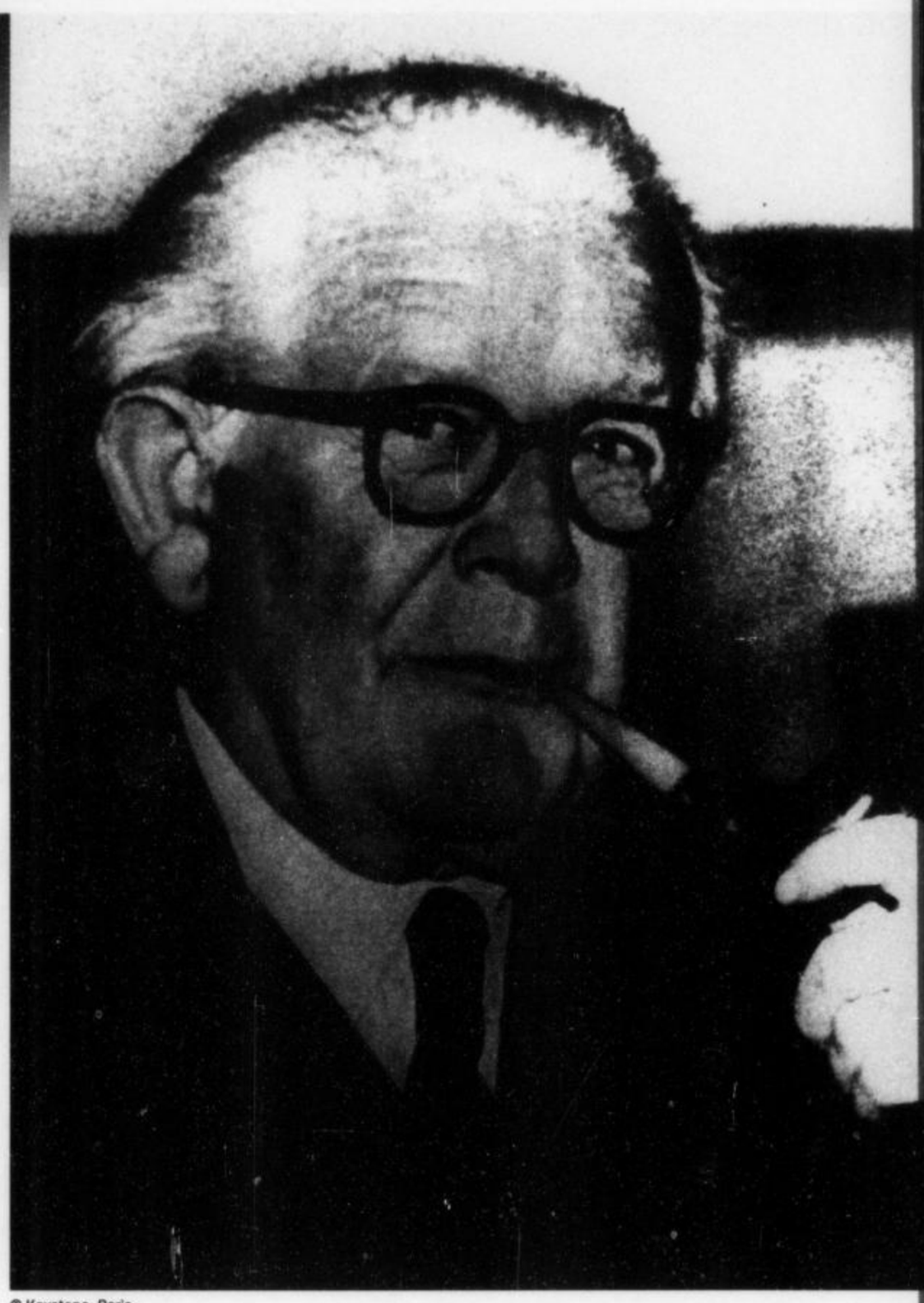
Anniversary

Jean Piaget

Swiss psychologist (1896-1980)

A foundational thinker

by Richard Schumaker



© Keystone, Paris

This year educational institutions, professional journals and international organizations of all kinds are commemorating the centenary of Jean Piaget's birth. Born on 9 August 1896 at Neuchâtel (Switzerland), this biologist, psychologist and philosopher altered and deepened our understanding of human life. Primarily known as a child psychologist, he used his research on young children as a springboard to a better understanding of the human personality. As our century comes to a close, not a single area of the human sciences can escape the influence—balanced, humane and original—of Jean Piaget.

The child as active agent

Piaget is probably best known for his writing on the early life of children. His importance in this field derives principally from his innovative methods and ambitious goals. Instead of applying adult preconceptions and social norms to the study of childhood, Piaget tried to describe and evaluate the point of view of the developing child. In essence, he attempted to reconstruct the daily life of the child in all its confusion, turmoil and anxiety. This methodological innovation resulted in discoveries that upset some of our most complacently held beliefs about childhood.

In hundreds of articles and books, Piaget showed that there is almost nothing absolute or static in a child's mental life. Even seemingly fundamental notions such as space, time, relation and causality are constructed through trial and error in the course of the child's early years. Moreover, the whole edifice of the adult personality—its rationality, its morality, its very perceptual stability—is founded on the physical processes of the child's early years. Piaget was very fond of the analogy of "grasping"; before one can grasp an idea, one must learn to grasp concrete objects. The infant's earliest, faltering movements prepare and foreshadow its later development.

Childhood as touchstone

Piaget also studied how this early landscape of the child evolves from year to year. Once again, he emphasized the tentative trial-and-error nature of the child's world. Although he charted an intricately structured course from birth to the assumption of the complex responsibilities of life, this evolution is discontinuous and constantly interrupted by conflicts with the child's surroundings. Thus, Piaget's account of the stages of early life is much more realistic and less tendentious than the accounts of Freud, Erikson or Maslow.

Piaget's firm grasp of the flux of early life allowed him to use his studies of childhood as a platform for something even deeper—the identification of the essential traits of life itself. The processes and structures of early life were used as clues

RICHARD SCHUMAKER,
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to the nature of life in all its generality. At this level of study, Piaget was breaking new ground in Western thought.

Instead of rejecting childhood as beneath the dignity of serious philosophical study, Piaget, who after all read widely in philosophy all his life—insists that only a close study of infancy would allow us to slip beneath prejudice and habit and enable us to see life in something like its true condition.

From Neuchâtel to the international scene

From his earliest years, Piaget demonstrated both interest and talent in the natural sciences, sending a paper on albino sparrows to a Neuchâtel journal at the age of ten. By 1916, he had published twenty papers on molluscs. These papers were valuable enough to bring him into consideration for a curator's position at the Museum of Natural History in Geneva. In an autobiographical sketch,[1] Piaget relates that it was necessary to refuse this prestigious position because "[he] still had two years to go before finishing [his] secondary education".

In his twenties, Piaget developed an interest in psychological problems and worked with Theodore Simon, a collaborator in the Binet scale of intelligence. It was during this time that he worked in Eugen Bleuler's psychiatric clinic in Zurich and became acquainted with the clinical method he would later use in such an innovative fashion in his own research.

Piaget held numerous academic posts in Switzerland and France after he received his doctorate in zoology in 1918, but was never a reclusive or overly specialized researcher. From the early 1920s he realized that his ambitious intellectual goals would require collaboration and international dialogue. For decades he was associated with the Jean-Jacques Rousseau Institute in Geneva (now the Institute of Educational Sciences). In 1956 he persuaded the Rockefeller Foundation to financially assist his International Institute of Genetic Epistemology at the University of Geneva. He was actively associated with UNESCO as a member of its Executive Board, as director of the International Bureau of Education (IBE), and for a short time as Assistant Director-General for Education.

Jean Piaget may be termed a foundational thinker. He delved beneath prejudices, biases and encrusted habits in order to uncover the essential well-springs of cognitive life. This constituted a liberation of energies which in turn laid the foundation for growth and renewal in both individuals and societies. Piaget's work, combining enormous breadth of learning with a powerful focus on life's essential questions, is without doubt one of our century's greatest treasures. ■

1 Cahiers Vilfredo Pareto, 1966 no 10, Geneva, Druz. *Author's note.*

As it was...
THE UNESCO COURIER
November 1980

The psychology of marbles

by Jean Piaget

Children's games constitute the most admirable social institutions. The game of marbles, for instance, contains an extremely complex system of rules which constitute a well-marked social reality, "independent of individuals" and transmitted, like a language, from one generation to another.

We simply asked ourselves (1) how the individuals adapt themselves to these rules, i.e. how they observe rules at each age and level of mental development; (2) how far they become conscious of rules, in other words, what types of obligation result (always according to the children's ages) from the increasing ascendancy exercised by rules.

During the first part, it is sufficient to ask the children how one plays marbles. "Teach me the rules and I'll play with you." The child then draws a square, takes half the marbles, puts down his "pose", and the game begins. It is important to bear in mind all possible contingencies of the game and to ask the child about each. This means that you must avoid making any suggestions. All you need to do is to appear completely ignorant, and even to make intentional mistakes so that the child may each time point out clearly what the rule is. Naturally, you must take the whole thing very seriously, all through the game. Then you ask who has won and why, and if everything is not quite clear, you begin a new set.

Then comes the second part of the interrogatory, that, namely, which bears upon the consciousness of rules. You begin by asking the child if he could invent a new rule. Once [it] has been formulated, you ask the child whether it could give rise to a new game: "Would it be all right to play like that with your pals? The child either agrees to the suggestion or disputes it. If he agrees, you immediately ask him whether the new rule is a "fair" rule, a "real" rule, one "like the others", and try to get at the various motives that enter into the answers.

If, on the other hand, the child disagrees with all this, you ask whether the new rule could not by being generalized become a real rule. "When you are a big boy, suppose you tell your new rule to a lot of children, then perhaps they'll all play that way and everyone will forget the old rules. Then which rule will be fairest—yours that everyone knows, or the old one that everyone has forgotten?" The main point is to find out whether one may legitimately alter rules and whether a rule is fair or just because it conforms to general usage (even newly introduced), or because it is endowed with an intrinsic and eternal value.

Having cleared up this point it will be easy enough to ask the two following questions. (1) Have people always played as ▶

THE PIAGET CENTENARY

Through its International Bureau of Education (IBE), UNESCO is closely associated with many of the celebrations, including seminars, publications and exhibitions, which are marking the centenary of Jean Piaget's birth. An issue of the international educational journal *Prospects* (vol. XXVI, n° 1, March 1996) was devoted to a study of the topicality of Piaget's educational thinking. The 45th session of the International Education Conference, which was held in Geneva during the first week of October 1996, examined the role of teachers in a changing world and included a round table meeting on Piaget and education. An exhibition on Piaget's life was shown during the Conference and was later presented at UNESCO's Paris Headquarters during the 150th session of the Organization's Executive Board. A symposium on "Piaget after Piaget", organized with UNESCO support, is being held on 15 and 16 November 1996 at the University of Paris-Sorbonne. (For further information, tel: (33 0) 1 46 33 14 45; Fax: (33 0) 1 40 46 96 51). ■

▸ they do today? (2) What is the origin of rules: Are they invented by children or laid down by parents and grown-ups in general?

The main thing is to grasp the child's mental orientation. Does he believe in the mystical value of rules or in their finality? Does he subscribe to a heteronymy of divine law, or is he conscious of his own autonomy? This is the only question that interests us. The child has naturally got no ready-made beliefs on the origin and endurance of the rules of his games; the ideas which he invents then and there are only indices of his fundamental attitude.

In practice

From the point of view of the practice or application of rules four successive stages can be distinguished.

A first stage of a purely *motor* and *individual* character, during which the child handles the marbles at the dictation of his desires and motor habits. This leads to the formation of more or less ritualized schemas, but since play is still purely individual, one can only talk of motor rules and not of truly collective rules.

The second may be called *egocentric*. This stage begins at the moment when the child receives from outside the example of codified rules, that is to say, some time between the ages of two and five. But though the child imitates this example, he continues to play either by himself without bothering to find play-fellows, or with others, but without trying to win, and therefore without attempting to unify the different ways of playing. In other words, children of this stage, even when they are playing together, play each one "on his own" (everyone can win at once) and without regard for any codification of rules.

A third stage appears between seven and eight, which we call the stage of incipient *co-operation*. Each player now tries to win, and all, therefore, begin to concern themselves with the question of mutual control and of unification of the rules. But while a certain agreement may be reached in the course of one game, ideas about the rules in general are still rather vague.

Finally, between the years of eleven and twelve, appears a fourth stage, which is that of the *codification of rules*. Not only is every detail of procedure in the game fixed, but the actual code of rules to be observed is known to the whole society.

These stages must of course be taken only for what they are worth. It is convenient for the purposes of exposition to divide the children up in age-classes or stages, but the facts present themselves as a continuum which cannot be cut up into sections. This continuum, moreover, is not linear in character, and its general direction can only be observed by schematizing the material and ignoring the minor oscillations which render it infinitely complicated in detail.

Consciousness of rules

Let us turn now to the consciousness of rules, [whose] progression runs through three stages.

During the first stage rules are not yet coercive in character, either because they are purely motor, or else (at the beginning of the egocentric stage) because they are received, as it were, unconsciously, and as interesting examples rather than as obligatory realities.

During the second stage (apogee of egocentric and first half of co-operating stage) rules are regarded as sacred and untouchable, emanating from adults and lasting forever. Every suggested alteration strikes the child as a transgression.

Finally, during the third stage, a rule is looked upon as a law due to mutual consent, which you must respect if you want to be loyal but which it is permissible to alter on the condition of enlisting general opinion on your side.

The correlation between the three stages in the development of the consciousness of rules and the four stages relating to their practical observance is of course only a statistical correlation and therefore very crude. But broadly speaking the relation seems to us indisputable.

The collective rule is at first something external to the individual and consequently sacred to him; then, as he gradually makes it his own, it comes to that extent to be felt as the free product of mutual agreement and an autonomous conscience. And with regard to practical use, it is only natural that a mystical respect for laws should be accompanied by a rudimentary knowledge and application of their contents, while a rational and well-founded respect is accompanied by an effective application of each rule in detail.

There would therefore seem to be two types of respect for rules corresponding to two types of social behaviour. This conclusion deserves to be closely examined, for if it holds good, it should be of the greatest value to the analysis of child morality. ■

This article was adapted from "The Rules of the Game", a study carried out by Jean Piaget (with Mme. V.-J. Piaget and Messrs M. Lambercier and L. Martinez) which constitutes the first chapter of *The Moral Judgment of the Child*, published in 1932 by Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co. Ltd, London.
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The Seine-Saint-Denis Young People's Book Fair (France)

The *UNESCO Courier* will have a stand at this year's Seine-Saint Denis Young People's Book Fair to be held from 27 November to 1 December (2 December for the trade only) in the Paris suburb of Montreuil. The Fair offers a broad spectrum of young people's literature and selects prizewinning works published in the current year. The creation of the world will be the theme of an international symposium (25 and 26 November), discussions and exhibitions designed to shed light on how the origins of humanity and the universe are perceived in different cultures, to promote dialogue between the imaginative process and scientific research, and to consider the ethical problems raised by cosmogonies.

For further information:
Centre de promotion du livre de jeunesse Seine-Saint Denis,
3, rue François-Debergue, 93100 Montreuil. (France)
Tel: (33) (0) 1 48 57 57 78; Fax: (33) (0) 1 48 57 04 62

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FOR THE FIRST TIME IN ENGLISH, KOREA'S GREAT NATIONAL NOVEL

LAND

by Park Kyong-Ni
Translated from Korean by Agnita Tennant
1996, 657 pp.
ISBN: 92-3-103251-8 / 194 FF
UNESCO Publishing/Kegan Paul International

Acclaimed as one of the masterpieces of modern Korean literature, *Land* is an epic novel that captures the heart and soul of Korea through a time of profound turbulence and change. Opening with the celebration of the Harvest Moon Festival in 1897, the plot revolves around the household of a rich landowner embittered because his wife has not borne him a son. Carrying on over forty years, the saga evokes the nation's past, with all its unresolved conflicts, hereditary sorrows and regrets. In this work, Park Kyong-Ni, born in 1926, brings to culmination the themes she had been exploring in her earlier works, such as women's sorrows, love, human dignity and the conflict between traditional values and those of the new age.

ADMIRE THE GIFTED HANDS OF

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Edited by Jocelyne Étienne-Nugue
ISBN: 92-3-103201-1 / 130 FF

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OF ART AND

TOLERANCE

Based on an original idea by Dominique Roger and Claudine and André Parinaud
1995, 191 pp., photographs
ISBN: 92-3-103235-6 / 240 FF

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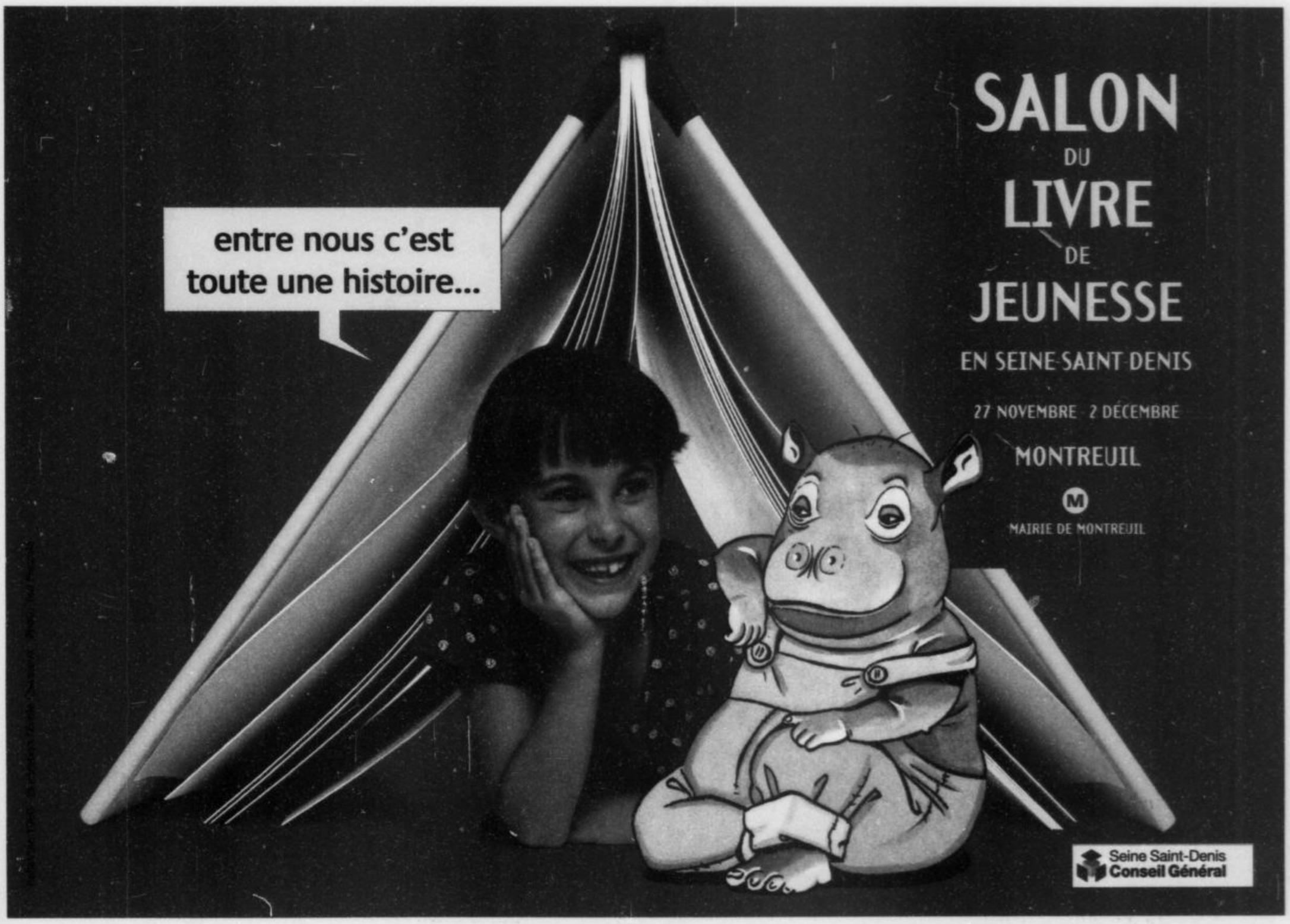

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UNESCO

UNESCO's fiftieth anniversary

Campaign on behalf of renovation and rehabilitation plans for UNESCO Headquarters

"One cannot be a modernist without first understanding heritage, and one cannot be a traditionalist without first realizing that everything that is built was once modern."

Renzo Piano

UNESCO, which today has 185 Member States, is the only institution of the United Nations system with its headquarters in France.

Inaugurated in 1958, the buildings housing this forum of the world's cultures were designed by three eminent architects: Marcel Breuer, Pier Luigi Nervi and Bernard Zehrfuss.

The "three-pointed star" design of the main building, which rests on 72 *pilotis*, is a fine synthesis of 20th-century functionalist architecture in which exceptional effects are achieved with reinforced concrete.

Today the building materials are beginning to show their age. The concrete is crumbling, and the plate-glass windows no longer satisfy energy-saving requirements. In addition, conference room facilities have been outstripped by growing needs resulting from the increase in the number of UNESCO's Member States.

UNESCO and its Member States have accordingly adopted a renovation and rehabilitation project designed by the Italian architect Renzo Piano, who has reconciled the building's original design with today's needs. The key words are functionality, openness and respect for the raw materials used.

First of all the entire ground level, including the gardens, will be refitted. Then the public spaces on the first underground level and the seventh floor will be renovated and decorated. The work will be executed by French architect Jean-François Schmit.

The murals by Joan Miró and Llorens Artigas will once again be located in the open air, as they were originally designed to be. The public will be able to admire the many other artworks at UNESCO Headquarters, in a newly created "cultural walk": the Japanese garden designed by Isamu Noguchi, the sculptures by Henry Moore, Robert Jacobsen and Alberto Giacometti, Alexander Calder's mobile, the new meditation space by Tadao Ando and the Square of Tolerance sculpture garden by Dani Karavan.

In January 1996, on the initiative of the Headquarters Committee consisting of 25 UNESCO Member States, an appeal was launched to the international community, public and private organizations and individuals, for contributions in cash or in kind. ■

For further information, please contact:

Mr. J.-C. Bendana-Pinel

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Division of General Services

7, Place de Fontenoy, 75352 Paris 07 SP, France

Tel: (33[1]/0[2]) 1 45 68 05 35; Fax: (33[1]/0[2]) 1 47 83 88 76

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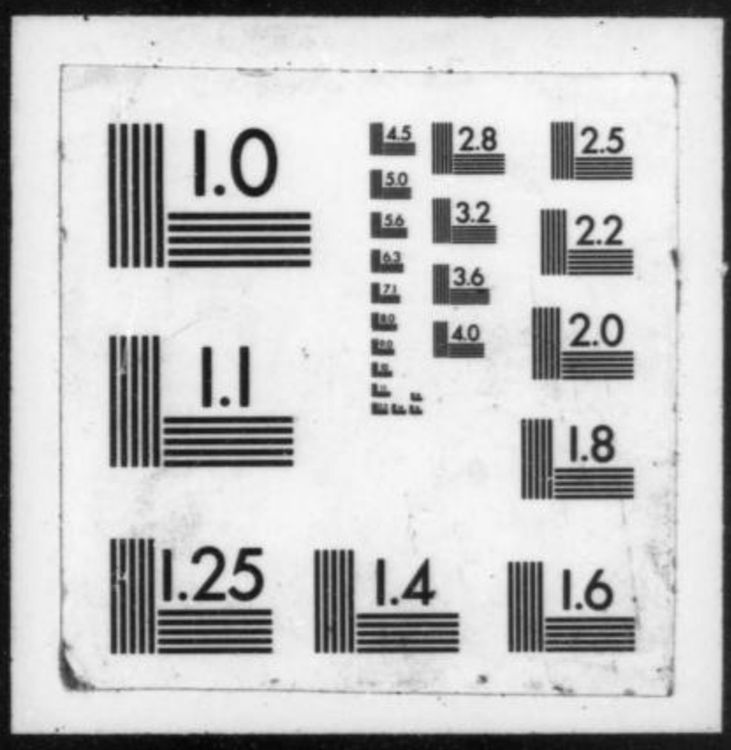
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